THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

DECEMBER, 1925

WHEN WILL CHRISTMAS COME?

BY JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

Peace! and to all the world! Sure One,
And He the Prince of Peace, hath none!
He travails to be born, and then
Is born to travail more again!
— HENRY VAUGHAN (1656)

I

ONLY God could have thought of Christmas. Its beauty is beyond the wit of mortals, so simple in its sublimity, so homey yet so heavenly. On a tapestry woven of stable-straw and starlight it unveils a picture to soften and purify the heart, and to bring us back from a wisdom that is not wise, because it is hard, unholy, and unhopeful. Man would have made it a pageant, its stage directions as follows: —

Array of Great Ones
The Army marches by
Fanfare of trumpets
Enter the King

Our pageants pass and fade, but God works in slower and more secret ways. He blows no trumpet; He rings no bell. He begins within, seeking His ends by quiet growth, and by a strange power that men call weakness, a wisdom mistaken for folly. Man has one answer to every problem — force; but that is not the way of God. He did not send an army to conquer the world; He sent a Babe to make a woman cry. The divine method is different: —

The crowded Inn
A Mother and a Babe
No cradle, but a Manger
A man stunned by wonder
A wandering Star

Such wisdom bends the knee; such beauty breaks the heart — and mends it. It is a scene to sanctify the world, as if to teach us that God enters the life of man by lowly doors, attended by starry ideals and simple shepherd sentiments — 'one of the children of the year.' They are wise men who bow at such a shrine, linking a far-off pilgrim star with the cradle of a little Child. By such faith men are truly wise, knowing that no hope is too high, no dream too holy to be fulfilled — even the hope and dream of 'peace on earth among men of good will.'

No wonder it is a scene of mirth and music. As Botticelli sees it, angels are singing on the roof of the inn, and all the world is aglow with a new joy. Dance is mingled with devotion, and laughter with liturgy. Nay, more: he sees a path winding its way to the

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Manger, and along it we need to return, we who walk thus far down the ways of time, lest we forget the thing which has come to pass.

II

Mayhap, if we take that path, an old faith and a new joy will be born in us, bringing a sense of huge dawns that sleep before us, deep changes, and a great hope. For, while we are not hopeless, we are unhopeful of a world Christmas of which the vision tells. Much has happened betimes: war has followed war, woe has been added to woe, and ages of cruelty divide us from that Manger-Cradle under singing skies. Even in our own day a storm of world war has swept over us, leaving a black swirl of wreckage in its wake. Until we wonder, in spite of ourselves, whether the vision is not too fair ever to have been true in the past, and too frail ever to come true in the future.

Our faith is dimmed by a cloudy cynicism; our skyey idealism is darkened by a blurred bitterness. Ten million young men dead — the fathers of dream-children never now to be born! Such a fact makes even Christmas pensive, and we wear crape on our hearts. Only God can trace the echo of those guns and the ruin they wrought in the lonely places of the soul. Even when we talk of peace, and lay plans to outlaw war, our hearts are haunted by a deep dismay. Men still take the name of Jesus on their lips, but in act they adopt rites more befitting the worship of Moloch. The world is a scene of wasted powers, but no waste is so wicked as the waste of child-life. Each age childhood offers us a new beginning, and we have so far failed to break the entail of evil.

Yet the world desires nothing so much as peace; for seven years we have been groping in search of it in vain. The desire has been pathetic, but we have gone the wrong way to attain it. Every road we have taken has proved only a bypath, leading us to the brink of an abyss. In our misery we have turned back and sought another, only to find ourselves in the same danger and despair. At any rate, the fact has been burned into our minds that it is neither sane nor sensible nor possible for humanity to go on living on a basis of war — and that means much. It has even become a saying among us that we must end war, else war will end us, bringing the house of man down in a charred and smoking ruin. But, alas, words such as these have been said before, and to no avail.

At the end of the struggle with Napoleon, in the years of famine and hatred and woe that followed, a Peace Society was formed. For a time it flourished, and then it faded. Gradually the high resolve in the hearts of men to end war ebbed out. Apathy and inertia ensued. New times brought new men who had not lived through the tragedy, and knew not its horror. At last the Peace Society became for many rather a nuisance, for others a bit of a joke. Dark forces gathered; clouds crept over the horizon; old envies, old vanities, old fears, old demands for trade and territory, returned — and again the world was shaken by the thunder of war. Will it be so again? Is it not going on before our very eyes? Is not our symbol a poppy? Will Christmas ever come?

Or must we admit that Christmas is only a fairy story, heart-woven and dream-spun, and that the gray shadows which life casts over us are the grim truth? Is it no more than a figment of fancy, tender and lovely, fragrant with old memories, enshrined in the love and armored with the wonder of childhood — a day of make-believe tugging at our hearts with the pull of playtime? After

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all, has the Church only made a party for the Christ Child, inviting Puck and Peter Pan and Tiny Tim, and dear old Santa Claus, each to bring a note of elfin glee, blending all into an eerie anthem with a song of angels long ago? In short, is it an airy unreality, too fragile for a world of feud?

No — Christmas is both a fact and a faith; but even if it were only a brief season of good will, a holiday from our forgetfulness of others, or just a family festival, it would be welcome. At least it is a day of poetry in the midst of drab days of prose. But, if we have journeyed the path Botticelli saw, other thoughts have been laid upon our souls. One little Child — and therefore, by a swift and sure logic, all little children who make the world so young, and keep it so. One who has been to Bethlehem can never lose his reverence for these new lives breaking out of the dark with promise of hope for the race. Nor can he ever cease to wonder at the folly of man, so careful of his material wealth, so careless of his real treasure; and equally at the pity of God.

> God abides in a terrible patience
> Unangered, unworn,
> And still for the child that was taken
> A child is born.

III

Such facts, faiths, fears, and pities mingle in the mood of our day, so sorely disillusioned. But the tasks of the days ahead ask us to defy dark moods, to rise above misgiving and work the old alchemy of our faith. No one can overestimate the spiritual factor; without it we lose our way in a bottomless bog. It is not enough that high-minded men of state outline a plan of world order and peace. That is necessary. But all their plans and visions must depend for their fruition upon a spiritual life rising out of the heart of the people — a power of faith, a will to creation. Only the very genius of the religious spirit can achieve such vision and power.

Happily, by all the tokens, the tide is turning, and men are taking counsel of deeper needs and finer forces. For one thing, we have seen, in the outworking of ideas and events, that materialism ends in utter futility and chaos. In fact, as in philosophy, it is a proceeding in moral bankruptcy, and the verdict is written in red for all to read. No wonder men turn from it aghast. Fifty years ago men of science were proud to be materialists, but it is not so to-day. They are more nearly mystics, trying to wring a kind of mysticism out of matter, since man must be a mystic if he is to be a man at all, however he may hide the fact. Unless all signs fail, the wistful restlessness of the modern soul, astray in its own life, betokens a return to the eternal mysticism in which man finds faith to live and power to achieve.

By the same token, the feeling is widespread that we must have a new heaven if we are ever to have a new world. In other words, men are everywhere dimly aware that a deeper, more vivid sense of God — nay, experience of God — is the profoundest need of our age. They may not put it so in words, but they know it in their hearts, as they know nothing else. By an awful exegesis of events we have learned that no law, no diplomacy, no device invented by the wit of man, can heal the broken lives and warring wills of men. When all is said, only religion can redeem mankind from the law of the jungle; not religion as an abstraction, still less as a huddle of sects, but religion as a mighty law and principle of being. No archaic orthodoxy, no dainty modernism, is equal to our need. There must be a new dimension of religion, uniting the old vision of

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faith with the new facts of the world and its laws. Our need is for a religion more direct, more drastic, at once more heroic and fraternal, with a daring kind of goodness, in which skill is blended with pity and joy.

No doubt it may be said that such a need is nothing new on earth and among men. Nor is Christmas — if it be only a story of long ago, enshrined in legend and enskied in art. But once we see that Christmas is no legend, but a revelation of God in the life of man, it becomes revolutionary, and we know it will come when we are worthy and ready to receive it. Often one feels that we are on the eve of the startling discovery that our religion, to our own astonishment, is actually true, in a way and to a depth which we have never even dreamed, and that to neglect it is for the race to rush down a steep place and perish.

IV

Thus one seeks to read, in a swift glimpse, more by hint and divination than by any record, the hidden signs of the time, so to speak, as they lie back of particular items in the programme of peace. Our programmes are important. It will be of far-reaching import if we make war both a sin in religion and a crime in the public law of the world. More important still, if only because it is less negative, is the effort by contact, by conference, and by the spread of knowledge, to obtain recognition of the fact that the interests and good of humanity as a whole really exist, and that nations are a part of one another, even though it is right that each should aspire to its own ideal.

All the while, to urge it once more, behind all our efforts in behalf of a better mind and mood in the world we need the spiritual impulse and insight. Never more so than to-day, when it is so fatally easy to fall into the cynic mood and say that human nature is human nature, and that we can expect nothing better of it than greed and revenge. For if man is a being in whom God can dwell, as Christmas affirms, if his soul may even be a cradle of the Eternal Love, then our highest social visions have hope of fulfillment. Then, indeed, we have not only a Divine Ally working with us, but also a hidden ally, potential and prophetic, in 'the better angels of our nature,' to which we do not appeal in vain. To this faith we must add clarity of thought and charity of heart, and, above all, a new sense of the vast hope that lies hidden in man.

For Christmas is the theology of a civilization yet to be. Like the early Christians, we must live in an air of expectancy, as of something immense impending, of a profound change to take place. For us there have so far been two divisions of time, before Christ and after; and so we reckon our days. But a new division may yet be marked, to which the second period is leading up, as the first led up to the second. At any rate, men of spiritual awareness in all lands feel that a time has come in the history of man when he must take a step into a higher range of being, or else lose and slip back. Stated starkly, to save his life he must reverse the old order of the brute, and assert a diviner law of love, not as a poetic faith, but as the actual basis of his life. So, and only so, can our wounded world be lifted out of the shadow of strife and cruelty into the light of justice and joy.

It can be done. The morning of the world is young, and man is only a step or two on his march to the City of God. His future, even if measured by his past, is unimaginable; but the past is no test of what he can be and will be.

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Already he has found new powers and dominions to which we can set no limit, and to-day he is peeping on tiptoe through a keyhole into unguessed regions yet to be explored. As he has discovered new potencies in nature, new elements, new distances, so in the realm of spiritual reality he will unlock new depths, and order his life by a diviner law. Soon or late he will live in a frontierless and unfortified world, ruled by moral intelligence and practical good will. The Christian era lies ahead of us.

V

In this fact is to be found the answer to the questions that bewilder us betimes. Why do we live for one day by the law of love and then turn again and rend each other? Wherefore do nations at war lift up hands in prayer to Him who taught us to love our enemies? Why do men who deny Christ yield, for one day, to the spell of His spirit of pity and joy? Is there any explanation of such a deficit between dream and deed? Yes. It lies in the fact that Christmas is a prophetic day, looking not so much backward as forward. It is a history of the future, of an order of life not yet attained, of a religion not yet realized. To our dull eyes it seems visionary; to God it is vision.

Over an armed camp, in a hard old Roman world, the song of the angels rang out, proclaiming 'Peace on earth among men of good will.' How far off it must have seemed on that night! How far off it seems to-day! Yet it will come true. It is not a myth; it is not a mockery. Surviving ages of slaughter, it still haunts us, proving its immortality. It is not a mortal melody, but a divine symphony. Because it is far off we know that it is not our own music, but was sent into the soul of man by One who is as far above us as the stars are above the mists.

It is a song out of the heart of the world. It means much that we can hear it, despite gray fears and grim facts, forever singing above a din of strife; and, hearing it, take up its strain in a world of feud. Not in our day, not in many days, perhaps, but at last it will be fulfilled. The world will fill up with men of good will who keep step to its music and live by its law — men who know that man was made for love, because God is love, and that love and joy will blend in the final note of the great world-song.

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SING

A SONG OF SIXPENCE

BY JAMES NORMAN HALL

SEVERAL years ago while living at Papeete, the capital of Tahiti in French Oceania, I found myself so low in funds that it seemed the part of wisdom to retire for a time to one of the remote country-districts until I could repair my fortunes. On the windward side of the island, thirty-five miles from the town, I found an attractive place about an acre in extent, with a one-room house on it precisely suited to my needs. My verandah overlooked the sea, and a clear mountain-stream flowed through my small domain, so that I had both fresh- and salt-water bathing; but a more important feature than either of these was the cheapness of the rental — $3.00 per month.

The land thereabout was so fertile that I decided to make a vegetable garden. In the tropics gardening would be a delightful occupation, and it might easily prove so profitable that I should never again need to resume my old trade of journalism. So I set to work, hopefully enough, glad of the necessity which had brought me to this decision.

The experience was disillusioning. Millions of tiny red ants carried away most of my seed, and, if any happened to be overlooked by the ants, the moment they sent forth green shoots these were sheared off by land crabs. After three months of patient effort all that I had to show for my toil was two ears of sweet corn (or, better, corncobs, for the rats had eaten off the kernels), three small tomatoes, and one squash. Having estimated my time as worth, at a modest figure, twenty cents an hour, and adding expenditures for seed, garden tools, and so forth, I found that these vegetables cost me $15.50 each.

Nevertheless I resolved to try once more, and ordered from America a fresh supply of seed — a small quantity this time, for my funds were getting low; and furthermore, because of my innumerable enemies I meant to garden on a reduced front. But when I had cleared away the weeds — how marvelously they had flourished meanwhile, without care! — and saw the hosts of ants drawn up in waiting battalions, and the ground perforated like a sieve with the holes of land crabs, and a crab at the entrance of each hole, waving his keen-edged nippers in the air, I lost heart. 'It is useless,' I thought. 'I'd better go back to journalism. Although not a lucrative profession, it is more profitable than gardening, and if I practise it faithfully I should be able to earn at least twenty cents an hour.' Therefore I put away my tools and left Nature to plant whatever she would in my garden plot. She chose, as before, lantana and false tobacco.

That afternoon I was oiling and cleaning my typewriter, which had long been rusting in disuse, when a Chinaman named Hop Sing drove past my door in his dilapidated spring-wagon.

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He lived a quarter of a mile down the lagoon beach from my place, in a house which he himself had built from the boards of old packing-cases and roofed over with flattened-out biscuit-tins. I knew that he had a vegetable garden, — although he raised only sweet potatoes, watermelons, and a very tough variety of field corn, — so I hailed him, thinking he might find use for my dollar's worth of seed. He stopped, willingly enough, and I brought out to him a small packet each of beans, sweet corn (Golden Bantam), squash, pumpkin, lettuce, and tomato seed, all of the best varieties. Hop grunted expressions of mild interest while I explained what the various packets contained, and, when I had finished, asked: 'How much?' 'Oh, nothing at all,' I replied. 'A little present for you.' He grasped the back of the seat to steady himself, perhaps, from the shock of receiving a present in that heathen land, and his black eyes glittered a trifle more brightly; but these were the only evidences of emotion — if it may be called emotion — that he displayed.

I forgot Hop Sing forthwith; there were other things to think of, chiefly the precarious state of my finances. Having counted on my garden to furnish food, I had spent my little capital all too freely. Luckily my rent was paid several months in advance, but I had left only 128 francs — a little more than $5.00 American, at the current rate of exchange — and not a penny coming in until I had written something, story, sketch, or what not. The manuscript would have to be sent to America, and even though it should be accepted at once — a remote possibility — I could not hope to receive a cheque for at least three months. How was I to live in the meantime? There were bananas on my place and about fifty coconut palms; but my landlord, a native, reserved the right to both the nuts and the fruit, which was no more than fair, considering the modest rental he asked for house and grounds. The nuts were gathered as they fell and the bananas picked green to send to the Papeete market. I thought of fishing, but, remembering past experiences, I knew it would be foolish to count on that. I had no better luck at fishing than at gardening. No, I should have to live, somehow, on my 128 francs. That, of course, was impossible, so I resolved not even to try. I kept 28 francs for incidental expenses, spent 25 francs for native tobacco, — if I was to write I should have to smoke, — and the remainder for sweet potatoes and tinned beef. When the food was gone — well, I should worry about that when the time came.

Three days later I was on page two of a sketch which I planned to call 'Settling Down in Polynesia,' a story of some experiences I had had the year before. It was Sunday, but necessity knows no holy days and I was doing my utmost to work. The mere fact of having to work seemed to make accomplishment impossible. I had written and rewritten the two pages of my story, vainly trying with each new draft to blacken page three. I was aroused from a mood of profound dejection by a knock at the back door. It was Hop Sing, and with him were his wife, their three small children, and a wizened little man with a scant beard and shaped like an interrogation point. Hop was dressed in a clean cotton undershirt and a pair of dungaree trousers. His wife wore a pyjama-suit of black silk, and her hair was elaborately dressed. She carried one child on her arm, led another by the hand, and had a third, the baby, in a sling at her back. The children were beautifully dressed, and each of them had on a little skullcap of blue silk with

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flowers and butterflies embroidered on it in gold thread. The ancient wore a coat like a dressing-gown. He was very feeble and got down from the wagon with difficulty. It was pathetic to see the effort it cost him to walk. He would advance his staff a few inches and, grasping it with both hands, make a shuffling hop up to it. Then he would rest for a moment while gathering strength for a new effort. We helped him up the steps and at length all were seated on the verandah, Mrs. Sing sitting sidewise on her chair because of the baby in the sling. My unwashed breakfast-dishes were on the kitchen table, and several slices of fried sweet potato on a greasy plate looked anything but appetizing. I was ashamed of the disorder of the place, the more so because this was the first visit I had ever had from the Sing family. Both Hop and his wife looked about in appraising fashion, but whether they approved or disapproved it was impossible to judge from their faces.

'My fadda-law,' said Sing, indicating the old man.

I smiled and nodded.

A rather long silence followed. I felt embarrassed and could think of nothing to say.

'What name you?' he then asked.

I told him. Another interval of silence. I gave my forefinger to the baby on Mrs. Sing's lap. It clasped it gravely and held on. Mrs. Sing smiled. Her father, too, smiled; at least his face wrinkled suddenly, like a pool into which a pebble has been thrown. The small baby in the sling was asleep, its chubby arms sticking straight out. It looked like a doll rather than a real baby. The oldest child, a boy of six or seven, had the curious mature look and the air of profound wisdom common to many Chinese children.

Sing took from his pocket one of the packets of seeds I had given him.

'What name this?' he asked.

'That? Corn, sweet corn — Golden Bantam. Very good. Tahiti corn no good — too tough. This corn fine.'

'Where you get?'

'From America,' I replied.

He brought forth the other packets.

'All this Melican seed?'

I told him that it was, and the best that could be bought.

He was silent for a moment. Then he said: 'Make fine garden now. No have good seed before. Make plenty big tomato now, plenty squash, plenty corn. Bimeby you see.'

Thinking of my three tomatoes, about the size of marbles, I was not sanguine about Sing's being plenty big. However, I expressed the hope that they might be. I brought out my seed catalogue and showed him pictures of the various vegetables. He was much interested and exchanged remarks in Chinese with his father-in-law. Meanwhile one of those heavy local showers common at Tahiti in the rainy season broke with violence. The thunder of water on my tin roof was deafening. Soon the cloud melted into pure sunlight, the last of it descending in a fine mist shot through with rainbow lights. Sing then went to his wagon and returned with three huge watermelons. He made a second excursion, bringing this time a live fowl, a bottle of Dubonnet (vin apéritif), and a basket containing seventeen eggs. All of these articles he placed on my kitchen table.

'Littly plesent, you,' he said with a deprecatory gesture. Mrs. Sing and her father then rose, and all three shook my hand, bidding me good-bye with smiles and nods. A moment later they drove off, leaving me astonished at this expression of Chinese friendliness.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the value to me of their generous gift. Tinned beef is a nourishing food, but I

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had lost all relish for it during the Great War. As for sweet potatoes, I had eaten so many while knocking about the Pacific on trading schooners that I could hardly endure the sight of them. How welcome, then, was this more palatable food! I planned to have a chicken dinner at once, but on second thought decided not to kill my fowl. Perhaps she would lay, and if I could somehow procure a rooster I might, from that small beginning, raise enough chickens to provide for all my needs. So I staked the hen out in the door-yard, with a string tied to her leg; and, having found several coconuts partly eaten by rats, I broke these open and gave her a good meal. Then, having dined on a six-egg omelet with half a watermelon for dessert, I resumed my work with interest and enthusiasm. All the afternoon the bell of my typewriter rang with the steady persistence of an alarm gong at a railroad crossing, and pages of manuscript fell from my hands like autumn leaves after a heavy frost. By six o'clock that evening I had reached the end of my 'Settling Down' story.

I had no time to lose if I were to get it in the north-bound mail. The monthly steamer from New Zealand to San Francisco was due at Papeete on Monday. I decided to go into town to post the manuscript, not being willing to trust the native mail-carrier with so precious a document. A motor-bus ran daily between Papeete and Taravao, a village just beyond my place, but the fare for the round-trip was twenty-four francs. I should need at least ten francs for stamps and expenses in town, so I decided to walk in to Papeete and, if I had enough money left, to ride back. Therefore, having fortified myself with a small glass of Dubonnet and another six-egg omelet, I set out.

It was a beautiful night, dewy and still and fresh, with a full moon rising above the palm trees on the Taravao isthmus. The road wound this way and that around the shoulders of the hills, now skirting the sea, now crossing the mouths of broad valleys where the *hupé* — the night breeze from the interior — blew cool and refreshing. I had glimpses through the trees of lofty precipices festooned with the silvery smoke of waterfalls and, on the left hand, of the lagoon bordered by the barrier reef where great combers, rising to break on the coral, caught the moonlight in lines of white fire. From native houses along the road came snatches of song, a strange mixture of airs, part French, part Tahitian, to the accompaniment of guitars, accordions, and mouth-organs. On verandahs here and there women were busy with their ironing, sitting cross-legged on the floor with a lamp beside them, and far out on the lagoon the lights of the fishermen were already beginning to appear.

I walked briskly along the moonlit road, feeling at peace with the world and with myself. How pleasant it would be, I thought, really to settle down in this remote tropical paradise, to remain here for the rest of my life. Where could I find kindlier people, or a life more suited to one of my indolent habits? If it were true that a man's wealth may be estimated in terms of the things he can do without, then in that sense I might hope soon to achieve affluence. Material possessions added little to the sum of one's happiness, and I could always earn enough at writing to provide for the simple necessities of life. Whenever the mild-eyed melancholy tropical wolves came sniffing apologetically at my door I could knock off a story of one sort or another; then I could live on the proceeds of the sale of it until it became necessary to write another.

So I mused, proceeding on my way;

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but at length, toward midnight, when I had covered about half the distance to Papeete, I found myself again thinking of food. The nourishment stored in my second six-egg omelet had already been absorbed and its energy expended. I had a drink of water from a mountain stream and tightened my belt a notch or two.

'I'll have a good breakfast when I get to town,' I thought. For three francs I could buy a large portion of chop suey at one of the Chinese restaurants; that would have to suffice until I returned to the country, which I meant to do at once, as soon as I had posted my manuscript.

At a place where the road followed a lonely strip of beach I came to a thatched hut, and sitting near it, by a fire of driftwood, were an old native man and woman. I stopped for a moment to enjoy the beauty of the scene. The stems of the palm trees were black against the firelight, which flickered over the faces of the old couple and cast huge shadows behind them. They saw me, and the old man called out, '*Haere mai ta maa!* (Come and eat!)' This is merely a friendly greeting, and I replied in the usual way, '*Paia vau* (I'm not hungry)'; but if my empty stomach could have spoken it would have made indignant denial of that statement. But evidently they really meant that I should partake of their midnight supper. They were roasting in the coals what appeared to be shellfish and some sort of native vegetable, and an appetizing fragrance filled the air. 'Come!' said the old woman in the native tongue. 'Try this, it is very good' — and putting several generous portions in a coconut shell she held it up to me.

Good? I should think it was! The meat of the shellfish was as delicately flavored as that of the finest lobster, and the vegetable had a mealy, nutlike taste. My hosts seemed delighted at my appetite and urged more food upon me. 'Eat! Eat!' said the old man. 'We have plenty — enough for a dozen,' and he pointed to several buckets filled with uncooked food; so I ate with a will.

'What kind of shellfish are these?' I asked. 'Did you get them on the reef?'

'Shellfish! These are not shellfish; they're *tupas*.'

'What!' I exclaimed. *Tupas* are land crabs, and those I was eating with such relish were members of the pestiferous family, countless in number, which had assisted the ants in ruining my garden. I did n't know they were edible, but the old man told me that Tahitians thought them a great delicacy, which they are, in truth. As for the vegetable, it was not a vegetable at all, but a nut, the fruit of the *mapé*, the Pacific chestnut-tree. These trees flourish at Tahiti. They are found along the banks of streams and in moist or swampy places. There was a grove of them on my place, and the ground beneath was littered with nuts that I had never bothered to examine, not knowing that they were of value. I was appalled at thought of the time and effort I had wasted trying to make a garden, when all the while there was an inexhaustible food-supply at hand, to be enjoyed without labor, to be had for the mere taking. But no; the taking of land crabs could not be such a simple matter. I remembered the wariness of those which infested my garden plot. They did all their damage in my absence. The moment they saw me coming they scurried to their holes and, if I made so much as a move in their direction, dodged down to safety. I had once caught one by digging him out, but that cost me two hours of hard work.

I asked the old man how he caught them and he showed me a method so

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simple and reasonable that I wondered I had not thought of it. He had a fish-pole and line, but instead of a hook at the end of the line he tied there a bunch of green leaves from the hibiscus tree. These leaves and the blossoms of the hibiscus are the principal food of land crabs. We went a little way from the hut to a spot in full moonlight where there were many crab-holes. 'Now stand very still,' he said. In a moment the crabs, which had scurried away at our approach, came warily up again. He then cast his bait very much as one does in fly-fishing. Immediately several crabs came sidling toward it. They fastened their nippers in the leaves, each of them trying to drag the bundle to his hole. The old man then gave a deft jerk to the line, and the crabs, not being able to disengage their nippers quickly enough, were dragged to his feet. He pounced upon them and threw them into the bucket with the others. I then tried my hand, with such success that I was tempted to forgo my journey to town. I wanted to go home at once and begin fishing in my garden, but more prudent counsels prevailed. One's appetite for food so plentiful and so easily procured might become jaded in time; furthermore, I should need a certain amount of money for clothing, shaving materials, tobacco, and so forth. Therefore, having bade farewell to my kindly hosts, I proceeded on my way and reached Papeete at dawn, just as the steamer that was to carry my manuscript to America was entering the harbor. Stamps for the precious parcel cost three francs. I then breathed over it a silent prayer and slipped it into the letter-chute.

Papeete is a colorful town, particularly in the early morning when the inhabitants are going to and from the market. Everyone is in the streets then, and the French and Chinese restaurants are filled with people exchanging gossip over their morning coffee. I had an excellent breakfast at a cost of four francs, and then strolled here and there doubly enjoying the gayety of the scene after my long sojourn in the country. I was walking along the Quai de Commerce looking at the shipping when someone touched my shoulder. It was a bald fat little Chinaman who had evidently been running after me, for he was out of breath and could not speak for a moment. Then he began talking in Chinese-Tahitian, a sort of *bêche-de-mer* that I don't understand. I shook my head. He renewed his efforts, speaking very earnestly and rapidly, and presently I caught the name 'Hop Sing.'

'Hop Sing?' I said.

'*É! É!* (Yes! Yes!)' he replied, and of a sudden he found some English words.

'You know Hop Sing? Hop Sing flen, you?'

'Yes,' I said. 'I know him. Hop Sing live close me, Papeari.'

Papeari is the name of the district where I was living.

The Chinaman's face glowed with pleasure.

'*Maitai! Maitai!* (Good! Good!) Hop Sing send me letta. I know name, you. You give seed; put in gloun, make garden. *Maitai! Maitai!* Hop Sing glad. Me glad. Hop Sing brudda-law me.'

'What name you?' I asked.

'Lee Fat. Keep store over there,' and he pointed down the street. 'When you go back Papeari?'

'Go this morning on motor-bus.'

'Goo-bye,' the Chinaman said, and rushed away as though he had not a moment to lose. I was surprised at the abrupt leave-taking and stood looking after him, hardly knowing what to make of the encounter, touched at

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thought of this odd little man chasing me down the street to thank me for the trifling favor I had done his brother-in-law.

I sat on a bench near the post office to wait for the motor-bus. 'The Beachcombers' Bench' it was called, for it was usually occupied on steamer day by waifs and strays from all parts of the world, men who sat there waiting for the distribution of the monthly mail, always expecting letters containing money and nearly always disappointed. 'I'm in the same boat now,' I thought. 'Three months hence I'll be sitting here nursing the same forlorn hope.' It was possible, of course, that my manuscript would sell at once, but, remembering past experiences, I knew it would be foolish to count on it. Well, I still had twenty-one francs, and I should have nine left after paying my bus fare. Certainly I should not starve, with land crabs and mapé nuts to eat, and meanwhile I should work at the journalistic trade as never before, sending manuscripts north by every steamer as long as I had money for postage. Having made this resolve, I put my worries aside.

It was nearly midday when I arrived at Papeari. While I was paying my fare to the driver, the boy who attended to the distribution of parcels put a box down beside me.

'You 've made a mistake,' I said. 'That is n't mine.'

'Yes it is,' he replied.

'No, no. I did n't have a box and I've ordered nothing from town.'

He insisted, however, that it was mine. A Chinaman had brought it just before the bus left the market, he said, and had paid for its carriage to my place. I still thought there was some mistake, but upon prying off the lid I found a card with 'Lee Fat, No. 118' printed on it. (Every Chinaman at Tahiti has a number. This is for some governmental purpose; to keep track of them, perhaps.) Under the name was written, in pencil, 'Mr. Hall, for you.' The parcel contained the following articles: one two-pound box of New Zealand chocolates, a large paper bag of lichi nuts, one quart of champagne (Louis Roederer), and a beautiful lacquered box with a gold dragon on the lid. In this box were two silk handkerchiefs and a silk pyjama-suit.

I was tempted to open the champagne at once, that I might drink long life and abundant health to Hop Sing and his brother-in-law, Lee Fat, No. 118; but I had no ice, and I knew that I could not drink, alone, a quart of champagne without having a headache the following day. So I tied a string to the bottle and lowered it into the cistern to keep cool. Then I went out to attend to my chicken.

She was gone. The string was still tied to the stake, but she had worked her leg out of the noose and vanished. After a long search I found her under the back steps. I reached in, very cautiously, to grasp her. She pecked at my hand and, as I drew her forth, gave utterance to the indignant squawks common to hens when they are sitting. Surely enough, she had laid an egg and was sitting on it; evidently she had been ready to sit when Hop Sing brought her to me. The egg under her was unfertilized, of course, so I took that out. Then I made her a nest of excelsior out of Lee Fat's box, and placed in it the five eggs remaining of Hop Sing's gift. The hen settled down on them with contented cluckings and, when comfortable, closed her eyes as much as to say, 'Now then, all I ask is to be fed from time to time, and twenty-one days hence we shall see what we shall see.'

It seems to me now that the definite upward trend in the graph of my fortunes began that afternoon when I

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started land-crab fishing. The results not only flattered my vanity — sadly in need of flattery — but gave me renewed confidence. 'At last,' I thought, 'I am a success at something.' I could not eat a tenth of the crabs I had caught, so I made a pen of stakes set closely together and deeply into the ground, and turned the surplus loose inside it. They immediately dug new holes for themselves, but this did not disturb me, for I knew I could easily catch them again. I fished all over my two-acre estate with such success that I had to enlarge the pen several times, and even then, and despite the fact that some of the crabs dug their way out, there were so many inside that the ground was honeycombed with their burrows. It occurred to me that by feeding them regularly on hibiscus leaves and blossoms I might add to their size and increase the delicacy of their flavor. The experiment was highly successful. The crabs thrived upon the regular and abundant food and I thrived upon them. At the time of Hop Sing's visit, what through worry and an uncongenial diet, I was very thin, but within six weeks I had gained fourteen pounds.

Meanwhile, upon the appointed day, my hen stepped out of her nest, followed by five bits of animated fluff. I was quite as proud of them as she was, and doubtless took more credit to myself on that occasion than the facts warranted. I fed both the hen and her brood on a mixture of roasted land-crabs and mapé nuts, and never have I seen chickens grow so rapidly.

It may seem incredible that my bottle of champagne should have remained unbroached during this time, but such is the case. In my interest in crab and chicken farming I had quite forgotten it; but one day, when my landlord was gathering coconuts in a near-by grove, I asked him to share it with me. He was more than willing, and at the first glass his habitually reserved attitude toward me altered at once. I then learned the reason for this attitude. He told me that his last tenant, an Australian, had not only eaten bananas and coconuts to which he had no right, but had gone away without paying his rent. We drank confusion to this scurvy tenant wherever he might be. Several of my landlord's children had accompanied him to the house, and I shared with them the box of New Zealand chocolates. It was a merry little party, and after much pleasant talk my landlord left me with repeated expressions of good will. The following morning I found on my back verandah a large bunch of bananas and a gunny sack filled with oranges and mangoes, and thereafter I was never without these delicious fruits, gifts from my landlord and his family. Not infrequently Mata, his wife, would send me, by one of the children, baked fish, breadfruit, and mountain plantain wrapped in green leaves, fresh from her native oven. I was overwhelmed with benefits and remembered with deep gratitude that I owed them all to Hop Sing.

His garden was flourishing; all of the seeds I had given him had sprouted and gave promise of a rich harvest under his patient, ceaseless care. He was always at work, and so too was Mrs. Sing, despite the demands on her time made by three small children. Sometimes of a late afternoon I walked down to their place, and usually found Mrs. Sing in a shed back of the house, where she sorted and cleaned bunches of lettuce and string beans for the market. All of her members were busy at once. She rocked the smallest baby, which hung in a little cradle from a rafter, by means of a cord attached to her foot. Every now and then she would pull another cord which hung

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just above her head, and this one ran, by a system of pulleys, to the garden, where there was a sort of jumping-jack scarecrow to frighten away the mynah birds; and meanwhile the fresh vegetables got themselves cleaned and deftly packed in little baskets. Sing was a baker as well as a gardener, and four times per week, after his long day's toil, he made the rounds of the district selling crisp loaves and pineapple tarts to the native population. Invariably, during these excursions, he left something at my gate, either a tart or a loaf of bread or a basket of vegetables, and to my great relief nothing I could do or say served to dry up his fountain of gratitude for my wretched little gift of seed.

Under these circumstances the weeks passed so pleasantly and quickly that steamer day — the third since the posting of my manuscript — was at hand before I realized it. I walked into town once more and waited on the familiar bench for the distribution of the mail. I waited all through the afternoon until everyone in Papeete and its environs had called for their letters. I waited until the sun was sinking behind the mountains of Moorea and the post office was about to close. Then, summoning all my resolution, I mounted the steps and walked toward the delivery window, saying inwardly, 'It's useless to ask; I'm quite certain to be disappointed.' The girl who presided there went hastily through a small heap of letters.

'No, there's nothing for you,' she said, smiling pleasantly.

I made a ghastly attempt to smile in return and was going toward the door when she called, 'Oh! Just a moment! What name did you say?'

I repeated it, enunciating the words with the utmost care.

'Yes, there's one letter,' she said. 'Fifty centimes postage due.'

Having paid this, I had left only a twenty-five-centime piece, the smallest coin in use in French Oceania. But little that mattered. The letter contained a gracious note accepting my manuscript, and a cheque for five hundred dollars!

To those living luxurious lives in the high latitudes five hundred dollars may seem a trifling sum, but to me it was a fortune. With the half of it I could pay the rental for my house and grounds for a period of nearly seven years, and, provided I lived as modestly in the future as I had in the immediate past, the two hundred and fifty remaining would suffice for other expenses for a much longer time. But now, with bright vistas of ease and plenty and peace of mind opening out before me, I found myself perversely considering the possibility of leaving Tahiti. The north-bound steamer to San Francisco was expected in three days' time, and I fell to considering the varied experience I might now have by virtue of movement and my five hundred dollars. Remembering my past fortunes as a journalist, I knew that it was the part of wisdom to stay here where living was, for the first time, within my means; and yet, if I did not go now, I might never again have enough money for a steamship ticket. I walked the streets long after everyone else was in bed, in an agony of indecision, and at last, as the clock in the cathedral was striking two, the decision was made.

Hop Sing was in town on the day of my departure. He had driven to market with garden produce, and both he and Lee Fat came to see me off. Fat insisted on my accepting a pair of Russian-leather bedroom-slippers and a Chinese fan of blue silk embroidered with gold butterflies. Sing's parting gift was a basket of tomatoes as large

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as oranges, and a dozen ears of sweet corn, Golden Bantam — the first fruits from the seeds I had given him. They smiled good-byes as the steamer backed away from the wharf; then I went at once to my cabin, in order that departure from that most beautiful of islands might be a little less poignant. While I was unpacking my bag the cabin steward looked in.

'You've been assigned to the doctor's table, sir,' he said. 'It's a table for four, but this trip there's only one other gentleman there besides the doctor.'

'All right,' I replied. 'And by the way, will you please have this corn prepared and served at luncheon? Take a couple of ears for yourself if you care to.'

'Thank you, sir. I guess the other gentleman at your table will be glad to see this. He ain't half complained about the food, and to tell you the truth, it's not what it might be.'

The doctor did not come down for luncheon. I had just seated myself when the other passenger at his table came in. He was a tall, spare man with a drooping white moustache and a bilious complexion. He was dressed in a baggy linen coat, knickerbockers, and low white shoes. He sat down without even a nod in my direction and, adjusting a pair of nose-glasses, picked up the menu card, puffing out his cheeks as he examined it, letting the air escape slowly through his lips. He struck me as being a man hard to please in the matter of food, no matter how good it might be. He was partaking of a fish course of creamed tinned salmon when the steward brought in a platter with ten splendid ears of Golden Bantam corn steaming on it. He gazed at it in astonishment.

'Take this away,' he said to the steward, pushing the dish of salmon to one side, 'and bring me a plate.'

Never have I seen a man give himself up to the enjoyment of food with such purely physical abandon. One would have thought he had not eaten for days. When he had finished his third ear he said, 'Steward, where does this corn come from? It 's not on the card.'

'No, sir, it 's not on the regular bill. It 's a gift to the table from the gentleman sitting opposite you.'

He gave me a quick glance as though he had just then become aware of my presence.

'Consider yourself thanked, sir,' he said brusquely.

I nodded.

'Is this corn of your own growing?'

'Well, yes, in a sense,' I replied.

He ploughed a hasty furrow along his fourth ear before speaking again. Then he said, 'What do you mean by "in a sense"? You either raised it or you did n't, I should think.'

He had a waspish, peppery way of speaking, as though he had been long accustomed to asking whomever whatever he liked with the certainty of a deferential reply. In view of the fact that he was eating my — or rather Hop Sing's — corn, I felt that he might have made an effort at least to be gracious. Therefore I merely said, as coldly as possible, 'Oh, you'd have to live at Tahiti to understand that.' Having finished my luncheon, I rose, bowed slightly, and left him there, still eating corn.

Half an hour later I was standing at the rail, aft, watching the peak of Orofena, the highest mountain at Tahiti, disappearing below the horizon. A hand was laid on my arm, and turning I found my luncheon companion.

'Well, young man,' he said, 'one would say you were thinking of jumping overboard.'

'I *have* been thinking of it,' I replied, 'but it's too far to swim back now.'

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'You like Tahiti as much as that? Well, I don't wonder. An island where they grow such delicious corn must be a good place to live. I ate six of those ears — finished the lot, in fact.'

'I 'm glad you enjoyed it,' I replied.

'See here! You must n't mind my manner. I've got dyspepsia, and a wayward liver and an enlarged spleen — Lord knows what all else the matter with me. Gives me a sort of jaundiced outlook on life. But I want you to know that I 'm grateful. Sweet corn is one of the few things I can eat without suffering afterward. Now then, tell me something about your island. I did n't go ashore. Useless trying to see a place in six hours. It 's only an aggravation.'

I scarcely know how it came about, but within a few minutes I was talking as freely as to an old friend. I told him of the beauty of the islands, of the changing life, of the mingling races, of the strange outcroppings of savagery through the shale of what in those parts is called civilization. Presently I cut off short, thinking he might be bored.

'Not at all,' he said. 'Well, you've had an interesting time, evidently, and you seem to have made good use of your eyes and ears. Too bad you're not a journalist. I don't suppose you've ever tried your hand at writing?'

'Yes, occasionally,' I replied. 'In fact, journalism is my trade, if I may be said to have a trade.'

'Got any of your stuff with you?'

'A few sketches.'

'Do you mind letting me see them?'

'Not at all,' I said; and so, at his suggestion, I brought him a small sheaf of things, six slight papers on various subjects, each of them about two thousand words in length. He settled himself in his deck-chair and adjusted his glasses.

'Come back in an hour's time,' he said, 'and I 'll tell you what I think of them.'

He thought two of them worthless, and curiously enough they were the ones I thought best.

'But these four are not bad. What do you want for them?'

'Do you mean you would like to buy them?'

'Yes, of course. But I forgot to tell you — I'm manager of a newspaper syndicate in America. We can use these sketches. Tropical-island stuff is always popular. It 's all bosh about the waning of interest in the South Seas. It never wanes and never will as long as life is what it is in America. Well, what do you want for them?'

'Oh, I don't know,' I said. I was about to add, 'Would one hundred dollars be too much?' — meaning one hundred for the four — when he interrupted me.

'Give you a hundred and fifty each for them. Is that satisfactory?'

I admitted that it was — quite satisfactory.

Adam — 'Our General Ancestor,' as Milton calls him — was undoubtedly the first husbandman, and a highly successful one during the early part of his career. But, even under the exceptionally favorable conditions prevailing in the Garden of Eden before The Fall, I doubt whether he ever reaped a richer or more varied harvest than I did in my garden at Tahiti. And it all came from a dollar's worth of seed.

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THE OFFICIAL RETURNS

BY H. G. DWIGHT

PERHAPS the real trouble with Mr. Dagonet was that he had too many creases on either side of his mouth.

At any rate they deepened as he hoisted a disreputable foot over a baggy knee (pre-Coolidge, if not pre-Harding, both of them), propped an Early American chin upon a preternaturally bleached and bony hand, readjusted to a Romanesque nose a pair of inelegantly thick glasses, and inspected with none too enchanted an eye the scene of his long-interrupted labors. After the Rocky Mountains the monstrosity looked more appalling than ever! Why in the world, if they insisted on setting it in front of the space of lawn and trees where he sat, had n't they taken their cue from those little brick houses behind him — simple and rosy and innocent, more or less of the period not of Mr. Dagonet's nose but of his chin — instead of piling up that pompous dingy mass of sandstone?

Not that he did n't know why. Part of the ground had belonged to the wife of one of the Trustees. The architect was the nephew of another. This young gentleman had been fortunate enough to visit foreign lands, and his Museum was a composite of his impressions. The recessed centre of his façade made a forecourt (Fontainebleau), which he enriched with two washtubs in Tennessee marble (Versailles). The path between them (neither Noble nor Eightfold, thought Mr. Dagonet, who was guilty of a book on the Arhats of Buddha) led to a stair of compromise between the practical and the monumental (Frascati), mounting to a portico of six Corinthian columns (Paris). It had been decided in full committee that four would look cheap, while eight would be ostentatious. The portico was surmounted by a pediment (Munich) in which nine wholesome American girls faced the weather in winter-weight draperies but without hats, accommodating themselves with what grace they might to the exiguities of their triangle. And somewhere beyond them, at the exact geographical centre of several acres of slate roof, a whitish swelling (Rome) was visible to the eye of faith. Indeed the top of it could actually be seen, between the months of October and April, from Mr. Dagonet's bench. What would you? The Trustee's nephew's ambition had been to crown his masterpiece in a manner not unworthy of the Popes. He had at least carried the day against cast iron.

Mr. Dagonet, who had visited Washington, was not ungrateful for that. But ruminating anew over the difficulties, disillusionments, surprises, and humors of the Noble Eightfold Path, he wondered whether it were because he had in other lives yielded himself to the Ten Bonds, to the Four Intoxications, to the Five Hindrances, because he had wantonly ignored the Twice Five Precepts of Aversion, that his still somewhat doddering and wholly unwilling footsteps now dragged him back to an edifice which had so much the air of a penal institution. A Reformatory, perhaps — for Wayward

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Boys! That ridiculous dome, however, reminded him uncomfortably of the Director who lived under it. And he could not help finding it rather ominous, if rather characteristic, that the Director should wish to see him as soon as he returned. For Mr. Dagonet was not a man whom Directors do most assiduously seek out. He was, rather, one of those invaluable but unpresentable beings for whom Directors reserve their darkest corners — and occasionally their most uncongenial tasks. Which being the case, he sighed, rose from his bench, took another look at his favorite row of brick houses, and clumped resolutely toward the Museum.

After a moment of debate as to whether he should not slink around to the private entrance and the elevator, the Early American chin had its way. Those steps might be lamentable, but they would be good for legs that had gone too long unused. Yet when he had extricated himself from that revolving door which he would so cheerfully twirl behind him for the last time, — and in fact he had been on the ragged edge of achieving his ambition, — when he had extricated himself as well from the greetings of his firm friends the guardians thereof, it might have been observed that Mr. Dagonet appeared to be in no haste to seek out the Director. On the contrary, he allowed himself to be led away by his fancy about the Home for Wayward Boys, finding it rather quaint that the Trustees, who had been so strict about the girls in the pediment, should permit these unblushing young people in marble and bronze and plaster to hang about the entrance hall. Wayward Boys indeed! And how about their creators? Mr. Dagonet had n't a doubt that ne'er-do-wells who had found nothing better to do than to make love had reproduced in materials less perishable than their emotions the slim or swelling contours of which their expert fingers kept the secret — and had given the result a name to mollify the most suspicious Trustee: Spring, Valor, Surprise, Grief, Solitude. The name was there on a ticket to convince you, neatly tacked to each pedestal.

Mr. Dagonet sighed again. For he had a complex. He abhorred tickets. He read them meticulously, like everybody else, before — or without — looking at the object to which they were attached. But if he had anything to say about them — which he had n't, being merely a minor factotum whom the Director had an infuriating habit of introducing as 'our Far Eastern expert' — he would abolish tickets, root and branch. Which reminded him once more that it was high time he hunted up that Director. Still, apropos of tickets, why not take in the new accessions on the way? He could laugh at his Home for Wayward Boys, but he could also be curious to see what they had been up to while he was convalescing in the sticks. He accordingly made, not for the Director's door, but for one where he was confronted by two more tickets. The larger and loftier bore the familiar rubric 'New Accessions,' while the lower and more unexpected read 'No Admittance. This Means *You!*'

Mr. Dagonet paused, asking himself not too grammatically whether that meant him. As he paused, the door opened gingerly. And who should sidle out of it, who should carefully close it again before advancing to meet the situation, in the well-cut morning-coat, in the white *dépassants de gilet*, in the light-gray spats inseparable from power and place, but the Director himself! Mr. Dagonet would never see forty again. Time had not perceptibly dampered, however, his instinctive reactions. He advanced to meet the situation with outstretched hand.

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'Aha!' he exclaimed. 'Caught at last! I was just looking for you!'

'Well, well!' cried the Director no less jovially. 'This is indeed an unexpected pleasure! Or I should say an expected one too long deferred. I hope you are feeling quite yourself again, after that nasty setback? And I trust you are not imprudent in allowing that note of mine to bring you over so soon.'

Mr. Dagonet was feeling quite fit again, thanks. Was in fact ready to remove mountains. At the same time he could not help noting that he himself was removed, by the cordial but firm hand of the Director, from the immediate vicinity of the door to an opportune seat near by.

'Splendid!' rejoined the Director.

It was not too splendid, however, for him to lack a moment in which to glance first about him and then at various points of his subordinate's anatomy. 'Like a conspirator,' thought Mr. Dagonet, who, although rather glad of another rest, was never too tired for fancies. His fancy of wayward boys recurred to him. Yes, the Director was just the type to manage a Home for Wayward Boys! He was a man for whom and by whom systems and hierarchies are invented. The law of his being required an orderly universe, in which his most wayward fellow-creatures had their logical and definite place. He knew by instinct the nice degrees of courtesy due superiors, equals, and inferiors of all ranks, and how on the day of a promotion to shift delicately from one to another. It was n't a thing for humor or speculation, as it might be with Mr. Dagonet. The world was like that. One climbed, according to one's forces, a long and arduous stair of grades, paying honor to whom honor was due, but never doubting that one's own day would come. Yet it struck Mr. Dagonet that, if the Director's day had come, it had turned out a hot one. Which left him the less prepared to hear the Director say, albeit with his conspiratorial air:—

'Of course you have seen in the papers that we have been left the Scratchard Collection.'

Mr. Dagonet himself began to feel the temperature of the day. For the first time in his life he questioned his wife's fidelity. Could she have seen so portentous a piece of news and kept it from him? He was too taken aback to waste time over obvious explanations.

'But of course I have n't! For a long time they would n't let me read a word. And out in the Rockies, you know —' So the stupefying woman was quieted at last! She had filled the world with the thunder and dust of her golden chariot, she had threatened to tie him to the tail of it, — merely because of a monograph or two and that incompetent little book on Arhats which he would so cheerfully suppress, — and now she reached out of the grave to play this fantastic trick! He might be surprised and annoyed, but he perceived that he might also arrive at the point of being amused. In fact it was with a smile that he said aloud: 'Well, we don't have to swallow it if we don't want to, do we?'

'But we do want to, don't we?' countered the Director with deference, with suggestiveness, and not without a certain curiosity. 'There is n't a museum in the country that would n't jump at it. The bequest includes, you know, quite a substantial sum for housing and maintenance. I hardly dared hope we could ever patch things up, after your refusal to help her with that catalogue raisonné. You seem to have made a deep impression on her, Dagonet!'

Mr. Dagonet recoiled. Never before had the Director addressed him without the prefix of formality. Nor did he care for the Director's archness. That

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phrase about patching up, too, made him suspicious. Mrs. Scratchard rather reminded him of the Arhat Pindola, performer of unnecessary miracles.

'Of course she might have collected warming pans,' he conceded. 'But what gadfly stings those people — that they insist on rushing in for this sort of thing? With her means she could very well have afforded to brush up the lost art of being a woman.'

'Well,' put in the Director dryly, 'she stipulated that you were to be Curator of her collection!'

The temperature mounted again.

'Me? Curator of her collection? Without so much as saying "By your leave"? Nonsense! How did she know I would n't throw it into the street?'

His thick glasses fixed the Director with something like a glare. As for the Director, he returned a beam — which swiftly took in again the neighborhood of the bench.

'The will provides for that. There are conditions. You are to be Curator, and nothing is to be thrown into the street. Otherwise —' A gesture of evaporation. 'But it means, of course, that we shall have a most enviable Section — and we can at last give you the raise you have so long deserved. Quite a comfortable raise,' he added, as if there were nothing more to be said.

'What of it?' demanded Mr. Dagonet. 'One may be a pauper, but one is n't a piece of furniture — to be shoved around at the whim of people like that. They think, simply because they can afford to pay whatever dealers choose to ask for the sweepings of their shops, that they own the earth and everybody on it.'

'Come, come, Dagonet!' expostulated the Director. 'You will be starting for Moscow next! Poor Mrs. Scratchard could n't help it if she inherited five fortunes. Of course I grant you that there are people of means who exaggerate. They become a little capricious, a little too used to having their own way. And, like the rest of us, they make their little mistakes. We ourselves are sometimes at a loss for an attribution. But, after all, they do more good than harm. And where should we be without them? Besides, you know that Mrs. Scratchard bought nothing but museum pieces.'

'Have you looked them over yet?' inquired the difficult, the unplacated, Mr. Dagonet.

'That is just what I wanted to see you about,' temporized the Director. 'There was a time limit, you know, and we had no idea when you would be back. Ill as you were, too. But of course we could n't dream of letting them go.'

'Why not?' demanded Mr. Dagonet anew. 'If the will really makes those idiotic conditions, I won't stand in your way. I would rather stay where I am, on next to nothing a year, than be responsible for a lot of rubbish that we shall all have to tell the most hideous lies about. Did the woman have the imbecility to insist that her stuff be kept apart from ours, even when they belong together?'

The Director made a motion of despair, accompanied by an inarticulate sound. But Mr. Dagonet had no bowels: —

'After all, who is running this show? Is our reputation a jewel to be guarded by dragons, or are we out to sell space to any paranoiac at large who wants to buy a little advertising?'

Yet the tide of Mr. Dagonet's eloquence did not sweep him so far but what he could ask himself whether it were possible that he had misread the signs of his chief's agitation. For he suddenly became conscious of a third presence in the vicinity of the bench. He turned. As he did so he discovered that the door of the New Accessions

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room now stood open. And what immediately transfixed his gaze was a ticket within the room, nobler and more legible than any he had beheld on this eventful morning: —

PRESENTED
FOR THE INSTRUCTION AND ENJOYMENT
OF THE PUBLIC FOREVER
BY
CORILLA SCRATCHARD
1861–1925

If Mr. Dagonet were a guardian of jewels, this was indeed a moment in which he might have proved a dragon. And who shall say that the thick glasses and unpressed tweeds of Sinologues caught in the wheels of hierarchies do not conceal emotions as tempestuous as those recorded of more romantic victims of fate? The moment was upsetting for the Director. It could scarcely be less upsetting for Mr. Dagonet, in whom boiled the humiliation of having been shoved about more like a piece of furniture than ever before in his life; who yet realized that if he yielded to his impulse and did twirl the door of the Museum behind him for the last time he would not be the only one to pay for it; who nevertheless felt his creases twitch in an inconsistent and diabolic desire to laugh at the ingenuity of Corilla's last trick. For now he would have to write that catalogue raisonné after all! But he did not laugh — then. Neither did flames and venom burst from him. As the moment passed he merely heard himself remarking: —

'Strong words, Corilla. Strong words. You know they say the lizard and the lion keep —'

The Director resembled Mr. Dagonet very little. In his way, he knew how to live. His alert eye detected the fact that the crisis had passed. He accordingly administered the final shove: —

'Mr. Smale, I believe you know Mr. Dagonet, our Far Eastern expert, whose famous work on the Arhats you and Mrs. Scratchard found so useful.' And, turning to Mr. Dagonet: 'Mr. Smale, you know, is the executor of Mrs. Scratchard's will. He has been elected to fill the vacancy on our Board of Trustees.'

There was another moment, during which the new Curator — who had been distracted from the discovery of Lionel by the greater discovery of the open door — shook the hand of the new Trustee — who would doubtless take considerable interest in the catalogue raisonné of the Scratchard Collection! But as the Director divined, experienced as he was in the temperamental outbursts of subordinates, the crisis had passed. Mr. Dagonet wondered how long Lionel had been listening. Oh, he knew Lionel Smale well enough, who was in the second grade when he was in the eighth. Lionel used to bring a posy to his teacher in the morning — and to suffer for it afterward on the playground. Yet Mr. Dagonet was not incapable of appreciating that in his former schoolmate which had so early brought him to the notice of the great. By no means blind to certain glances which were wont to linger in the vicinity of his own knees or collar-button, it did not escape him that Lionel knew how to keep his cravat up, his hair down — all those dark hermetic arts which to Mr. Dagonet were so much more impenetrable than Chinese ideographs or the subtleties of Buddhism. Lionel must have made Corilla quite a proper secretary. He might be able, too, to give quite useful points. The provenance of a picture and the name of the dealer were sometimes highly important. And a rapture a day, thought Mr. Dagonet inconsequently, keeps the doctor away.

The temperature having fallen to so

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perceptible a degree, the Director now considered it safe to lead the way to the New Accessions, once more carefully closing the door behind him.

'As there was so much uncertainty as to when we should have you with us again,' he explained, 'and since Mr. Smale happened to be familiar with the contents of the collection, it occurred to us that valuable time might be saved if we made a start at displaying the more important pieces. The new wing will hardly be ready for you before next year, I am afraid, if then. We felt, too, that we owed it to the public, as well as to the memory of Mrs. Scratchard. But of course this is really your domain, Dagonet. Mr. Smale and I are here only to give you what help we can. You must not hesitate to make any suggestions which occur to you.'

It was Mr. Dagonet who chose the seat in the middle of the room. The moment had passed, and he felt more doddering than ever. 'So much uncertainty as to when we should have you with us again!' The plain truth of the matter was that they had seized the chance, while he lay flat on his back, to put the thing over on him. In fact they had probably counted on his never returning at all. Still, the thing was double-edged. They had shoved him in, but they might not find it so easy to shove him out. He rolled that morsel under his tongue as he eyed Corilla's well-ticketed treasures and wondered whether he ought n't to have raised a rumpus — whether he might n't still raise a rumpus. What enraged him as much as anything, though, was the new note in the voice of a Director so adept in the fine art of shoving. The day of a promotion had arrived, and the scale of courtesies had to be revised accordingly!

'There is one thing which occurs to me,' volunteered Mr. Dagonet with an administrative air. 'You know I 'm not so frightfully keen on tickets.'

'Tickets?' inquired the Director.

'Tickets,' repeated Mr. Dagonet. 'Labels. Those small snuff-colored cards of more or less reliable information about the exhibits. It is not immaterial, of course, that the information be more reliable than less. But in neither case am I convinced that it serves any useful purpose.'

The Director winced. Tickets, and the infallibility thereof, were one of his strong points. As for Mr. Smale, he made an announcement: —

'Instruction was one of Mrs. Scratchard's principal aims. There are necessarily gaps in every collection; but she was fortunate enough to acquire, thanks to her long research and superior insight, examples of nearly all the more famous periods, schools, and artists. I feel certain that by a careful study of the pieces which she so generously left this Museum the average visitor will be able to follow the development and grasp the significance of Chinese painting. But in order to do that he must know what he is studying.'

'Then, you know,' contributed the reviving Director, 'the Museum already has a policy in that respect. We not only show the visitor a beautiful object. We tell him what it is, who created it, when. We thus make it possible for him, as Mr. Smale suggests, to trace, to compare, and to appreciate the great movements in art. You surely cannot think there is no utility in that, Dagonet!'

Mr. Dagonet stroked his Early American chin. 'I question it very seriously. Tickets are, of course, quite unnecessary for experts like ourselves.' He cast a grave eye upon each of his companions in turn. 'Moreover, in the case of the average visitor they distract his mind from what he really ought to look at, and so destroy his

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last chance of recovering the use of an all but atrophied organ. The greatest possible service we could do him would be to compel him to use his own eyes. That is infinitely more important than trying to ram down his throat a little superficial patter about great movements in art. In fact,' he hurried on, 'the trouble with this country is that it already knows too much about great movements in art. We have dozens of people who can build you an impeccable Greek temple or a superlative Roman bath, a perfect Renaissance palace or a good Italian garden or even a fair Georgian house. We have thousands of dealers who are ransacking Europe and Asia and Ohio for what they are pleased to call antiques. We pay unheard-of prices for Old Masters and period furniture — which are sometimes genuine. But what good does it do us? Do we scuttle home and chuck our overstuffed furniture out of the window? Do we have the courage to buy a twenty-dollar picture because we can see without being told that the man who painted it knew what he was about? Do we do anything to make our kitchen or our back yard or our street a delight instead of an abomination to the eye? We do not! We scurry out to buy a new overstuffed armchair or a slavish copy of a Chippendale. That is why counterfeiters are billionaires while artists starve. It is an age of imitation, and museums are chiefly responsible for it. It would be better for us if every museum in the country were blown up to-night!'

The Director exchanged a sympathetic glance with his accomplice. But he knew how to take it. 'In which case we should all be out of a very interesting job! I am afraid we have been too thoughtless, though, in our desire to have the benefit of your advice before opening this room to the public. You must not let us overtire you, Dagonet. Why not call it a day, and let me take you home in my car?'

Mr. Smale took it more seriously. He had perhaps heard too much!

'Whatever Mr. Dagonet's private views may be,' he said to no one in particular, 'the Trustees seem to have settled the matter of tickets, as he calls them. But I hardly need point out that Mrs. Scratchard enjoyed great opportunities and that, in addition to commanding the most competent advice, she had become herself a very distinguished authority. I therefore see no reason, at this late day, to question her attributions. And as her friend and executor I must object to the insinuation that there are counterfeits in her collection.'

Mr. Dagonet made a superhuman effort to control his creases. The conception of Corilla as a very distinguished authority entranced him. Corilla, who between parties skimmed three pages of Fenollosa! Corilla, who might close her door to an ambassador, but to a dealer never! Corilla, for whom abandoned temples on mountainsides had been rigged up with bonzes and antiques! Corilla, whose idea of a glass was a pair of astigmatic lenses mounted in platinum and brilliants!

'I don't think it matters,' he said pleasantly, 'if the counterfeit is a good one. Good enough, that is, to be in itself a real work of art. The point is that a museum can hardly label a marble bust which is no longer snow-white "Contemporary Portrait of Julius Cæsar" unless every hour of its history can be accounted for. There is always a romantic possibility that it may have come out of a Neapolitan stonecutter's shop in Jersey City in 1917. And unluckily we Americans, with our short memories, incline to overlook the fact that these flimsy things of silk and rice paper don't last so long as Roman busts. And we know

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even less about them. They have their roots in a tradition as outlandish to us as the moon. That is why I must, as Curator of Mrs. Scratchard's collection, under an important clause of her will, object to exhibiting any of her pieces until I have had an opportunity to go over the tickets.'

Was he difficult! The Director moved diplomatically out of the line of fire to an adjoining case. Who would have expected the fellow to turn out as difficult as that? Yet the Director himself looked at these matters not quite from Mr. Smale's angle. He made a second and more desperate attempt at a diversion, unlocking the case with his little pass-key.

'Here is a thing which will interest you, Dagonet — and one which proves that Mrs. Scratchard, like ourselves, realized the necessity of caution. No name. No — definite date. Merely the general indication "Legend of an Arhat."' He took out a partly unrolled makimono and handed it to his older colleague. 'Do you recognize it?'

Did he recognize it! Before taking out the powerful little pocket-glass which was as much a part of him as his thumb he recognized every stroke and letter and seal and patch and insert of it! Corilla had shown it, named it, and dated it to him on her way home from Paris in 1920 when, glittering with Allied decorations, she invited him to do the catalogue raisonné! And it had been one of several reasons why he so politely confessed he was afraid to take up even a temporary residence in Santa Barbara: he might be hit on the head by an orange!

'Yes, it is a charming thing. But —' He fiddled with his glass over one of the decorative inscriptions, asking himself how he should put it. 'Perhaps in moving the pictures from Santa Barbara some of the tickets got mixed. At any rate I do not recognize any of the more familiar attributes of the disciples of Buddha. On the contrary, the makimono seems rather to illustrate a famous poem of the fourth century — about one Tao Chien, who spent too many years of his life as Literary Inspector of Kiu-kiang, on the Yangtze River. He was at last promoted and transferred to Peng-tze. But he had been in his new post only a short time when he capriciously resigned — on hearing that he was expected to do obeisance to a certain young official of higher rank who was making a tour of inspection. "How can I crook my rheumatic knees before a child of my native town," he asked, "for no better reason than to earn a few grains of rice a day?" So he forthwith packed up and went home to his village of Tsz-sang-li-li, where he lived happily ever after.'

'But are you sure?' demanded Mr. Smale, meeting Mr. Dagonet's quizzical glance with frank skepticism. 'That was one of the last pictures Mrs. Scratchard bought — of d'Évereux. He even gave her a guaranty. How could he run such a risk?'

'How indeed?' echoed Mr. Dagonet. 'Yet extracts from the poem, not ill written or placed, are there on the margin to refute him — unless they were added by a later hand. But the makimono itself seems to bear them out. The first scene, you see, with a fine disregard of inconsequentials, represents the Official's arrival at his little house in the country. The centre of the composition is the barge with two strange timbers jutting out beyond the rudder post, an all but invisible design on them and on the sheer strakes picked out in the dullest red and gold. Two half-naked boatmen strain at the stern sweep, their faces set with anxiety to make a creditable landing, and a third manipulates a pole at the bow. The Official, impatient to get ashore, stands

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there in a blowing robe of blue, bordered with green and lined with a suggestion of wallflowers, or perhaps of autumn leaves, in front of that small arched cabin of painted rice-paper. Just such a boat as one should sail away in from the monotonies of routine, the perfidies of subordinates, the insolences of superiors, from all the enervating, the indurating, slavery, snobbery, pettiness, heartlessness, intrigue, artificiality, parade, and bondage to custom of official life — all blown away now around that pale-jade curve of the river, behind that highly conventionalized cloud hanging over the right background.'

The Director's second diversion appeared to be more or less successful. For the moment, at least, Mr. Smale had nothing to say.

'The bank which the barge approaches,' pursued Mr. Dagonet, 'has not, as you perceive, been subjected to the restraints of convention. It meets the ripple of the river with a ripple of its own. Sedges roughen the pale jade of the Yangtze, a rude boulder lies half in the water and half out, pebbles and wild flowers make as it were a pattern of neglect. A tiled archway marks the water gate, shaded by a great pine. A faithful wife, whose form has not wasted away under the attritions of life, stands there expectant in mulberry — or rather, I think, in eggplant — and wistaria, edged with marigold, a child in her hand, a busy-tailed dog on the steep stone ramp in front of her. He is barking at two more boatmen, one of whom drives into the gravel a stake for the line with which the other has just splashed into the shallow water. Two menservants wait respectfully with their hands in their sleeves, while between them a handmaiden, whom I suspect of having been repainted, prostrates herself in welcome on the damp pebbles.'

Mr. Dagonet, pausing to draw breath, noted a familiar sign — the string of the Director's pinch-nose winding and unwinding around the Director's forefinger.

'In the second scene the Official begins to taste his hard-won freedom,' he continued, 'amid surroundings admirably composed. A terrace divides the foreground into two unequal levels. A pair of trees, their dense leaves powdered with a gold which can only suggest the happiest sunlight, shade the lower area. Into the vine-hung penthouse at the left disappears the repainted handmaiden, not too rapidly for us to catch a glint of her holiday splendor of peacock and flamingo. From the penthouse has just emerged a second, a slighter, a less flamboyant handmaiden, in a green of young bamboo flowered with periwinkle and doubled with morning-glory, bearing refreshments of a superior order. Under those lichened eaves of the upper terrace sits the returned Official, done at last with drudgery save of his own contriving, his sober blue, green, and filemot set off by the buff wall behind him, the higher part of which lets in the sky through vertical perforations. At his right hand sits the faithful wife, who has not had time to change her costume, who indeed may well lack a change of costume, but who has added certain jeweled pins to her dark hair. Watchful is she of the well-being of her lord, watchful that nought in her house go amiss, not least watchful of the three children who sit on balancing black-bordered mats in front of the more imposing parental mat — a largish child in the silvered green of artichoke leaves, facing a smallish child in the blue of chicory flowers and a quite small child for whose peach-petal coat I tremble. For I discover no bibs. Do you? Between the children's mats stands a noble jar with two handles.

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Other receptacles of decorated porcelain, holding recondite dainties and fruits of sapiently contrasted hue, lie between the rotund knee of the Official's consort and his own. But the jar, whose generous proportions and exhilarating color proclaim the preciousness of its contents, is the centre of interest. The eye of the Official takes in with silent approbation his modest but perfectly designed courtyard, the ample contours beside him of eggplant and wistaria brightened with marigold, the softer, the more innocent curves of his artichoke-green child, of his chicory-blue child, of his peach-petal child. Nor is he unobservant of his two handmaidens, — at least of her in bamboo, periwinkle, and morning-glory, — of the fruits of his acre set forth on their well-chosen plates, or of his jar — superb in outline, superb in color, superb in its assurance of escape from the exasperations and humiliations of Peng-tze.'

'Extraordinarily interesting!' intervened the Director. 'How many scenes does the makimono contain?'

'This is only the second,' replied Mr. Dagonet. 'There are nine in all.'

Mr. Smale rose and stepped toward the open case.

'If there is any possibility of — a confusion,' he suggested, 'you had better put something else in a place as conspicuous as this.'

'But why?' queried Mr. Dagonet, all ingratiation. 'It is a charming piece — and really not badly done.'

'What period is it?' asked the Director, looking first at his Trustee, then at his Curator, and then at his watch. 'You surely did n't say fourth century, did you, Dagonet?'

It was Mr. Smale who held the ticket. But it was Mr. Dagonet who, finally, answered: —

'Fourth century is the period of the poem, not of the picture. The makimono can hardly be earlier than the eighteenth century.'

'Ching?' all but screamed Mr. Smale. 'Why, Mrs. Scratchard made it a point never to buy anything later than Ming!'

'Ching!' repeated Mr. Dagonet relentlessly, returning to his Official. 'Let 's see. Where were we? Oh yes. Number three. Outside the gate of the palisade the men are waiting. One restrains the curvetings of a long, low, prune-colored horse, rather too gaudily caparisoned, which I am not convinced the emancipated Official is eager to mount. At any rate he seems to inspect with some interest that cream-colored ox with a hump, yoked to a two-wheeled cart of red lacquer. This vehicle commits the *lèse-majesté* of having a yellow canopy and curtains, shot with silver, to guard the occupant against the sun and dust of Tsz-sang-li-li. No doubt it is also delicately cushioned within. Which shall he choose? And whither shall steed or vermilion wheels convey him?'

Had he chosen, Mr. Dagonet might have answered these questions in elaborate, decorative, and fatiguing detail. But certain indications apprised him that other engagements made it necessary for his audience to disappear without interrupting him, leaving him in sole possession of the New Accessions. And when he put the makimono back in the case he discovered, before snapping the lock, that the ticket which he would so have liked to see had disappeared as well. If, however, his creases then deepened a trifle, it was for no more than the barest instant. For it came to him that when on his way home he twirled the door of the Museum behind him, by no means for the last time, no barge would be waiting for him at the steps, no prune-colored horse, not even a two-wheeled cart of red lacquer curtained with yellow and silver.

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TRAMPING WITH YEGGS

BY PAUL ERNEST ANDERSON

I

A DESIRE for adventure and a season of ill-health furnished the excuse, not long ago, for an unusual walking-tour through northern Oklahoma and southern Kansas. My itinerary began at Liberal, Kansas.

While on this hike, I encountered that secretive group of men known to the newspapers as yeggs, but among themselves as tramps, and of this mysterious tribe I became, for the time being, an honorary member. Since it seldom happens that an outsider becomes intimate enough with tramps to learn their mode of life, I must explain that my association with them was largely due to my ignorance of the existence of this *gens hominis ambulantis;* for, all unaware, I had been making friends with one for a week or more before I left Liberal for the first few miles of my journey through the back country of the Bible Belt. This fellow was fifty years old, broad and heavily built, still agile despite his years, and possessed of a pair of keen, peering blue eyes, which sometimes reminded me of the eyes of a railway engineer. His monicker was 'Old Fox'; and he was aptly named.

I had been with him scarcely a week when he informed me that I would make a 'fine tramp kid,' and that he would be d—— glad to make one of me! A confidence which he may have regretted when he discovered that I had neither the intention nor the desire to learn the gentle art of 'cracking boxes' in 'obies' for my own enrichment and Uncle Sam's loss. But the old rascal was no fool. He did not rise up heroically as they do in the movies and denounce me; he accepted my decision as final, and permitted himself the liberty of philosophizing over it as we lay beneath the shade trees of an unfrequented roadside, our stomachs gorged with a tramp Ritz-Carlton dinner. We remained companions and roamed together for nearly three months, and our relations remained cordial, through his kindness and a pledge of secrecy on my part, whereby I agreed to divulge nothing of what I heard, at least until I went East. While I was with him I met other tramps, one or two of them notorious, famous even. I attended their séances, listened to their jargon about 'boxes' and 'screws' and 'obies' and 'cracksmen' and 'hog's-eyes' and 'mortises,' and became expert in recognizing a 'box' as a safe, an 'obie' as a post office, a 'hog's-eye' as a kind of lock, in general use in the South, resembling the eye of a pig.

To explain the status under which I masqueraded, let me say that a 'tramp kid' is a young man, usually between eighteen and twenty-two or -three, who for a variety of reasons becomes the apprentice of an old and recognized master-tramp, from whom the kid, in return for obedient and loyal service, learns the profession of tramping in all its specialties, from the simple 'con'

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game to the highly particularized art of cracking a box. Though they are often confused by the townsmen and the uninitiate — and even by bums themselves — with bums and hobos, tramps are neither bums nor hobos; they are a distinct and closed group, whose members undergo an arduous apprenticeship which usually includes a test term in a penitentiary to determine the ultimate fitness of the candidate for the 'holy orders' of trampery. Tramps do not work for wages, while bums and hobos sometimes do. A good tramp almost never begs meals or money; what a tramp wants he steals, or borrows without leave. The stealing and borrowing are carried on in various ways, one or two of which are unique and as yet, I believe, unknown to outsiders and even to the tramps' friends and enemies, the Federal sleuths.

Unless you engage in a fairly long conversation with a tramp and try to draw him out, you cannot from his appearance or manner tell him from the Chautauqua-going, free-silver Kansas farmer, or from the lean, shiftless rent-farmer of Oklahoma. As far as possible, the tramp may be said, in the words of Saint Paul, to be a true Christian, for he is 'all things to all men': if you are a farmer, he whines about weather and crops or goin' wages; if you are in business, it is of business conditions and the market he talks; if you are the silver-starred sheriff with the hard-boiled countenance, he will converse about jails, bad men, and penal laws. But if you are a fellow tramp or a kid, and you are not planning something big, he will talk over the day's news, foreign affairs, women, men, and 'heaven' — the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth. One single physical characteristic may be said to distinguish a large number of them — their eyes, which are unusually keen and peering, no doubt because of their night life of pillage, for they depend very little upon torches or matches. Religiously, they are affiliated with the atheists; ethnologically, Irish and American strains are predominant. Their boyhood environment usually has been that of orphanages, reformatories, and juvenile asylums.

However tramps may appear to outsiders, to one another they are recognizable on sight, even though they have never met before. What gives them away is perhaps their general air of prosperity and freedom from hurry or worry, and the fact that they really do pick up and carry from place to place tin cans for use in preparing their meals. After they have talked together to feel out the community of interests, they exchange monickers and politely laud each other in the most flattering terms.

A meal in the open, far away from the hobo jungle, well and appetizingly cooked and served, comes next. And over this meal the tramps descend to business intimacies, assuming their tramp jargon, perfectly secure while their tramp kids mount guard, looking out for or 'catting' strangers.

The conversation usually begins somewhat as follows: 'John, I catted around in the obie in —— City lately. Old box, soft iron, no glim burning over it at night. Not a screw in the town either. I figure that there's five in it when all the hicks are selling their crops.' All of which means that one of them has observed an old-fashioned iron safe in the post office in some city or town, which is easy to blow open and rob. It contains five thousand dollars, and is not watched by an officer of the law.

The tramps will compare notes on the relative advantages and profits of their respective prospects. These propositions are always considered thoughtfully and coolly, and that one is adopted which shows the most advantages and

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the surest signs of good money. A date and place of rendezvous are decided on for a later reunion in, say, the early fall; then, after dividing equally their respective resources, the tramps part, each disappearing as suddenly and completely as he came. After this encounter the outline of the proposition is presented to whatever tramps each one later meets, and their aid solicited if they are sufficiently impressed and not otherwise engaged.

In regard to their preference for post offices over banks, tramps say: 'You get lighter jail-sentences in Federal pens, decenter treatment, and more friends.'

Bank-robbery is a felony punishable by the respective laws of the different States, which are in universal accord in that they give heavier sentences than the Federal statutes for the robbery of post offices. In addition, Federal penitentiaries are notably more humane, far less harsh than Mid-Western State 'pens' operated by Bible-pounding wardens and surly 'screws,' who are noted among tramps as notoriously inhuman and brutal. Besides, the Federal pen at Leavenworth is regarded as a vacation spent among friends.

In the pen the tramp eats regularly, works leisurely, and exchanges ideas on technique with other tramps, often planning the cracking of some obie box while under the benign care of his bloated Uncle Sammy. In fact — so say tramps — many of the most celebrated yegging expeditions have been planned in the pen.

In prison, too, the tramp kid gets his final course. If he does n't steal, stands punishment unflinchingly, and treats all other incarcerated tramps as pals, he receives the highest laudations, and his name becomes known as trustworthy among the profession elsewhere. Tramps boast that they usually become 'trusties' while in the penitentiary, and are thus able to evade some of the rigorous discipline of jail and to communicate with one another more easily. Most old-timers regard this phase of the kid's apprenticeship as necessary and final in his ascent to full-fledged privileges as a master-tramp.

Should the kid prove 'yellow,' however, he is ostracized from the company of all prison tramps, and those on the outside are warned by underground means of his defection. I have myself met one of these 'yellow-bellies.' The tramps treated him cordially enough, but they did not allow him to sit in at their conferences, even though he was permitted to eat with them. No measures of reprisal are taken against the yellow-belly unless he has meanwhile become a 'stool.' Then he is regarded as a dangerous traitor, and revenge overtakes him. Stories are told by tramps of many historic revenges, — of year-long man-hunts, — but the writer has no knowledge of these events at first hand. He himself was once warned not to talk too much after he left the territory of trampdom.

II

But to return to our main subject. To become a tramp one has to serve one's apprenticeship for varying lengths of time, depending upon the nature and disposition of both the master-tramp and the kid. Kids are chosen usually after a period of observation by the master-tramp, who may have watched his prospective quarry for a number of days or even weeks before making his announcement to the kid. The kids chosen for this signal honor are selected from runaway orphan boys or from hobo kids with more than the usual hobo intelligence. The qualities which all tramps most admire in their prospects are independence, self-reliance, and fearlessness. After the

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tramp has been sufficiently impressed he will usually take over the youngster by suggesting that they travel together and divide their resources, showing the boy money as bait and dividing it with him. Often the tramp will go even further, and have the kid clothed at his expense.

The process of initiation is slow, but enough is told the kid to give him some idea of what is expected of him in manners and habits. Nothing is misrepresented; the kid's questions are usually answered frankly, and if he feels that he is unequal to the new manner of life he is allowed to return to the old, and is even urged to do so. But before going away he must give a pledge of silence, and he is advised to go 'straight' and always think of his friends, the tramps, as still cordial to him. These meetings with prospects who have not the wish to follow the tramp life are always quite friendly and sincere. This is the rule of the tramps' conduct, for the tramp life demands nerve, coolness, and fearlessness, as well as a strong sense of loyalty.

The first lesson taught the kid is how to be clean while traveling on the road as a tramp, for absolute cleanliness is demanded by the tramps. Meals are served in clean utensils, and good manners are observed while eating. The personal appearance of the kid is criticized and corrected. He is next taught to use his powers of observation accurately, so that in any given test there is no error. He is taught to look coolly for things and to make no deductions unless he has a fact of value upon which to base his statements. This is known among tramps as 'catting' or 'cattin' around.'

'Cattin' around' demands close and swift observation. It is absolutely necessary that while the kid is catting he shall arouse no untoward suspicion of any sort on the part of the casual observer in town or village, above all of the 'constabule' or sheriff. No guesses are allowed; only definite, unconfused information must be brought back. A boy must be able to name by its proper tramp-designation the lock of any door he is sent out to cat; he must be able to tell the number and kind of windows, their position in reference to the ground and the street, and the situation of any house in relation to the store, obie, or bank which he has catted; and he must be able to hold in his mind a definite picture of the roads near the objective, and other related facts. While exercising himself in obtaining a *coup d'œil* of the town, he must also attempt to learn the nature of the townsmen, whether they are suspicious or cordial to strangers and watchful or lax in regard to the safety of the town. Often on the basis of such information supplied by a kid, dangerous and highly doubtful yegging expeditions have been attempted and carried out.

Early in his career the kid learns the science of boiling dynamite to extract the 'soup,' or nitroglycerin. But before this is done either he or the tramp, his mentor, has stolen from a hardware store, oil well, or construction camp some sticks of gelatin dynamite, and has carefully concealed them until all danger of discovery seems past. He then chooses an isolated spot in the midst of a small grove of trees at some distance from any habitation, and begins his operations by starting a fire underneath a huge tin or dishpan. Into this utensil the dynamite is carefully dumped, and it is allowed to come to a boil, when the grease begins to rise to the top. This substance is the precious nitroglycerin, the essence of the explosive power of the dynamite — the 'soup.' This soup is then poured carefully into half-pint bottles, which can be conveniently carried in one's pocket. When bottled and cold, it is

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taken possession of by the master-tramp and placed, in what seems a careless manner, in one of his pockets, hip or inside breast, and carried about on his person until needed.

Kid-training such as this requires time and practice on the part of the tramp, especially since much of the information must be acquired at long range and in the fewest possible number of glances, so as not to excite suspicion. The kid is taught to have no fear of the law, and any unnecessary brutality toward a kid on the part of an officer of the law is promptly revenged by his mentor. If necessity demands, a jail will be blown loose to free the kid. In sections of the Southwest the hard-boiled 'bulls' who scare the bums to death never molest tramps.

But the really important business of the tramp is safe-blowing. Tramps refer to it as cracking a box. But this occupation is seasonal, depending, in the farming country, on the great harvest of grain and, in the cattle country, on the sale of stock. It is in the fall that the farmer has money, which he has obtained from the sale of his grain; and the banks must have cash to move the crop and enable the farmer to pay off his bills. For that reason the tramp plans to do his big business at this time, in the peak of prosperity, planning his get-away so as to reach the city in time to enjoy a wild and expensive winter.

Because of the fact that safe-blowing is the important business of the tramp, and because it is also a seasonal affair, it must always be borne in mind that a tramp on the road at any other season is a tramp living by his wits, comparatively poor, awaiting patiently the advent of fall, when bank vaults and post offices are full to overflowing. Since the tramp must live in a leisurely fashion in order to plan his future operations, and be free to wander at will to look over the terrain and plan his fall campaign, he cannot accept a job which will tie him to some particular locality. Moreover, he must feel free to meet and entertain other members of his calling, because yegging, being a specialized profession, demands the help of at least five or six men for an ordinary small-time safe yielding not more than five thousand dollars. All these considerations demand time and some ready cash; therefore the problem of the tramp is how to make money enough and still not work for wages and be tied to one spot.

The problem is usually solved in one of two ways, depending, of course, upon circumstances and upon the cleverness of the tramp. The less dangerous method and the more popular one among the younger tramps is vulgarly known as the 'con game of the watches.' From a firm which specializes in this sort of jewelry, tramps obtain an assortment of watches with seventeen or more glass jewels and presumably guaranteed gold cases. Each watch bears on its dial a standard name spelled with one letter changed. For example, an 'Elgin' becomes an 'Elgen,' or a 'Waltham' a 'Walthem.' The watches cost two or three dollars apiece. Armed with one of these, a tramp goes from house to house in smaller villages or railroad-division towns. He knocks on the front door and politely inquires for the man of the house. When the latter comes he is met with a hard-luck story that runs somewhat as follows:—

'Do you want to buy a railroad watch? An Elgin? Cheap?'

While talking, the tramp takes out the watch, exhibiting the jewels, the name, and the works.

'I'm down on my luck and gotta sell it. Cost me forty' (or more if the prospect looks sufficiently gullible). 'It's yours for twenty dollars.'

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Well, many people are looking for something for nothing. Here is a good standard timepiece, the name right on it, for half the price, or even less. The number of people who fall for this simple fake, year in and year out, is astounding. New customers seem to be born every minute for the smart young tramp with a 'phony' watch to sell. The tramp may sell only four or five a week; but five to ten hundred per cent profit on two or three dollars outlay is easy money. It suffices for ordinary tramp-needs during the slack season.

The watch game in addition furnishes the tramp with valuable information concerning local affairs. Usually after the sale is made the buyer has a friendly talk with the tramp in which he may innocently tell him many things about the local constabulary and the people of the town. These scraps of information are utilized by the tramp, who may be planning, even as he sells the watch, to blow the box of the town obie or the national bank. There are many variations of this game. The most usual one is that in which two or three smart young men, fairly well dressed, conduct a jewelry auction of a lot of fake jewelry in some small town that is without a jeweler.

The more ingenious scheme, and the second way by which tramps earn their living in the slack season, is known as 'weeding a dump.' Probably the despised nickel-pincher and the 'cockroach' business man who may chance to read this article will learn for the first time why and whither his stock has been mysteriously disappearing for many years. Most of it, he will find, is worn by Mexican section-hands, who have purchased it at really cut-rate prices. Some places have been weeded steadily for years, especially the larger and more prosperous stores that serve an extensive rural area.

III

Weeding is an art requiring nicety of judgment, a sense of balance and distribution, and, especially, rare self-control — all characteristically lacking in the ordinary robber. It is nothing more or less than the golden rule applied to thieving; for the tramp always allows the owner by courtesy to retain the lion's share, while taking away merely garments enough to clothe himself and perhaps a half-dozen Mexicans, food enough to last for several days, and some spending-money for the week-ends.

After the tramp kid has catted the store and learned that the owner himself, his dog, or his wife does not sleep on the premises, the tramp designs a key to fit the lock of the door to the store. Let us suppose that the lock is what is termed a hog's-eye. The tramp takes a twenty-penny nail and lays it carefully upon a railway track for an oncoming train to flatten out. Then he takes this flattened nail and files it into a hog's-eye key, which will generally fit any such lock. No method of turning a Yale lock has ever been perfected by tramps. In cases where there is a lock of this sort, the kid looks for an open transom or small window. Through this the youngster enters and opens Yale-lock doors from the inside. The case of the half-Yale is more interesting. This type of lock is so termed because its bolt is beveled. It is the easiest of any known locks to pick, as it can be pried open by inserting a piece of whalebone from an old corset or a piece of thin steel or iron between the door and the doorpost, and carefully working this down until it fits between the bolt and the iron hood which usually holds the bolt in place. This method has the additional advantage of needing no previous preparation on the part of the weeders, and does not, in the case of

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arrest on suspicion, lead to any embarrassing questions on the part of the sheriff or his deputy. Forsooth, almost anyone may carry a piece of steel or whalebone from a corset without necessarily falling under suspicion as a robber or tramp.

Once inside the dump, the tramp and his kid reconnoitre in order to reassure themselves that all is quiet and safe. Then, if a gunny sack is not available, an old shirt is made into a bag; the collar of the shirt is buttoned up and the sleeves are tied about the neck. This impromptu suitcase is filled with clothing, shoes, ties, tinned goods, food, and such other articles as are deemed needful. Usually the tramp fills one shirt for himself and another for the kid. All the pilfered articles are removed from shelf, rack, or case in such a way as not to excite the suspicion of the owner when he opens his store in the morning. No telltale signs are left behind; no bit of merchandise not needed is carelessly discarded. The store is left apparently just as it was found. The result is that the number of detections of tramp robbery is almost nil. Only the merest accident or some bit of carelessness proves the undoing of the weeder. When everything has been closely packed in the shirts or gunny sacks and the tramps are about to leave, the till of the cash register is opened. By the same principle of selection used in weeding the dump, money is removed from the drawer. The amount taken is determined by the amount in the register; never is enough taken to cause the owner of the store to suspect at once that there is something wrong.

The tramp and his kid then depart, taking a route along the railroad right of way, keeping down behind the embankments whenever a house is passed. By dawn they usually reach some favorable spot, a wood or a ravine, where all the stolen goods are quickly buried, but enough food is taken from the cache to last the day. With enough to eat, they lie in the shade of a tree and read and wait for the passing of the day to tell them that all danger of pursuit is over, that the owner of the store is still ignorant of his loss. Never, even under what seem the most favorable conditions, do they relax vigilance or talk about what was done the night before.

That night they sally forth to some near-by town, sometimes taking the loot with them, sometimes leaving it buried. Upon arriving, they drop in upon some Mexican shack at the time of the evening meal. There, among the so-called 'greasers,' the tramps are welcomed and fed. During the course of the meal the master-tramp, who nearly always speaks Mexican, recites the list of materials on hand, mentions the quality and style, and states the price of sale. If the Mexicans are willing to purchase, the kid goes back for the hidden goods, which are then laid out piece by piece and sold. Sometimes the Mexicans give their orders, stating their price in advance, so that when the tramp weeds a dump he does it to meet the orders of his customers. All that is sold is disposed of at ridiculously low prices.

By all tramps in the Southwest the Mexican is held in the highest esteem. In his dealing with the gentlemen of the road the greaser never takes a mean advantage, never 'snitches' on the tramp. The dark-skinned men from across the Rio are very fond of tramps, from whom it may be said that they receive about the only fair treatment they ever receive in these grand democratic States. I have listened for hours at a stretch to tramps and Mexicans as they talked politics and manners. Sometimes tramps hide their stolen property in the shacks of the greasers, accepting the word of honor of the head man for its return intact. Such a trust is

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never abused. The rest of the Mexicans would probably knife the compatriot who tried to make away with the goods or go to the local police. It may be said that the Mexican is the tramp's sole friend in all the Southwest.

That is the lighter and comparatively interesting side of trampery. All old tramps too aged for active work in cracking safes make their living by weeding dumps. But the grim side of tramping, and its *raison d'être*, is opening obies and cracking boxes.

IV

On the day and date, at the place previously agreed upon, all those invited to participate in the forthcoming robbery assemble. When everything is in readiness, and a leader has been chosen, the tramps move in upon the town and hide themselves. Between two and four in the morning is the time usually chosen for blowing the box. This allows for the explosion and robbery and the get-away. It may be said parenthetically that the get-away from the scene of the crime is always the most carefully worked-out feature of the whole act, excepting, of course, the acquisition of the money. It is the more important since tramps live and operate in a sparsely settled land, affording few places of concealment, and having but few roads and still fewer railroads. The get-away nearly always involves flight by rail on a fast freight to some junction point where another fast train is boarded. By morning as much space as possible is put between the tramps and the scene of the theft. This part of the programme presupposes a knowledge of the movements of railroad freights and their speed and destination. Contrary to popular conception, tramps rarely make use of high-powered cars, as these are too easily traced and identified. A hiding-place is chosen that neither man nor dog can trace, and it must be filled with sufficient food to last at least a week. In the hiding-place the loot is divided by equal shares among all the participants, the tramp kid receiving a share from his master, usually one quarter to one half of the latter's portion.

After the leader has been chosen, the men are placed strategically, according to the needs of proper defense. Each man carries a sawed-off rifle or shotgun, loaded. No matter what the size of the party, on the inside of the obie or bank there are always three men. Of these three men the head is the cracksman. He carries the soup. His kid carries a kit of tools, consisting of a steel drill, files, chisels, hammer, and a cake of ordinary washing-soap.

The cracksman takes his position before the box, sitting in front of the door and bracing his feet against it. On the floor before him — or at one side — lie the soup, the drill, and the soap. First he tries the knob of the safe in order to throw the tumblers of the patented lock, so as to open the door accidentally or to make easier its opening by the explosion. As soon as he is ready to drill, his kid and the assistant plant themselves behind his back, holding their knees hard against him to brace him for the arduous work of drilling a hole in the steel of the safe. The hole is made near the knob of the door, and is drilled until it penetrates far enough to blow out the bolts inside the safe and rip off the door.

When the hole has been drilled to the proper depth, the cracksman pours the soup into it, puts a fuse into the liquid, and stops up the hole with soap. An old blanket is often wrapped around the safe, both to muffle the noise of the explosion and to prevent flying débris. When everyone has carefully disposed himself either behind the furniture or outside the building, the fuse is ignited.

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Generally the force of the explosion, if it is carefully prepared for, results in the dislodgment of the heavy armored door, leaving the lighter inner door exposed. This door is jimmied open with a chisel and a hammer, unless the charge has been unusually heavy and has blown a hole clean through the box. After the explosion the safe is red hot, and great care must be exercised to avoid bad burns.

The noise of the explosion never fails to arouse the entire town. But it is the duty of the tramps stationed outside to hold off the citizens until the master-cracksman and his two assistants appear outside the door with the 'keister' or satchel holding the money and stamps. Until everyone is outside the building, no tramp deserts his post. Sometimes a second or a third shot of the soup is necessary to complete the job. Meanwhile the whole town must be held at bay, but no one killed, while the men inside work at a feverish pace. The record number of shots ever taken at a box is the well-authenticated attempt of the celebrated 'Heavy Alky Jimmie' (so named because he drank raw alcohol); twelve shots were taken before he finally penetrated to the inside of the box, only to find three cents instead of the fifteen thousand dollars he had hoped to obtain.

The first offensive measure taken by the tramps is the shooting out of all the visible lights of the town. Then in the dark they keep volley after volley whizzing over the heads of the townsmen to frighten them away from the scene of operations. The truth is that, although their money is being stolen, the townsmen have an abiding fear of tramps and rarely care to meet them in an encounter of this sort.

There is a standing rule among all tramps that no bloodshed must occur at a robbery. The danger and the risk of such a happening are entirely too great. Usually the tramps can keep the yokels at bay with a plentiful supply of shot sent just near enough to make them shiver. Only on the most extreme provocation will a tramp wound a burgher. That is why yeggs — real yeggs, not city toughs — are rarely charged with murder or homicide resulting from a box expedition. Sometimes after two or three shots have been fired, and the opposition on the part of the men of the town is growing hotter, the head tramp — the one chosen as leader — gives the command for a retreat. Then it is pell-mell and rush, every man for himself, to escape the posse that is almost certain to be organized to pursue the fleeing bandits.

Despite high-powered motor-cars, radio, telephones, and tear gas, the tramp still persists. But the frontiers of his country are rapidly being delimited and his field of operation is narrowing. In the end, perhaps, only darkest and most backward Arkansas will be left as his sole hunting-ground. That will make easier the problem of his extermination. Like many another picturesque road-robber, he is passing away. Younger men are coming in, younger men who care only for science and speed. Like the highwayman of old and of romance, the tramp will become one of the gallery of historic robbers. The honor of his profession, if such it may be termed, — the recognition that the fight with society is a game with humane rules, involving generosity, loyalty, a sense of humor, and buoyant anarchical conduct, — will then be no more than a memory. But by that time trampery will have fallen into dishonor by having become brutalized, democratic, and mechanical. It will truly have fallen among thieves.

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MR. JOHN HOOK WANTS HIS MONEY

BY EMILY STONE WHITELEY

THIS is the story of a laugh. A side-splitting, uproarious laugh that comes echoing down the years and reveals to us our Revolutionary heroes, not in their solemn portrait poses, but in a mood of ribald mirth, most abominably forgetful of dignity and justice and decency. It was an upsetting, demoralizing laugh that respected neither law nor order; a rough, barbarous laugh that cheated an honest man out of his due.

In 1789 a famous case was tried at New London, Virginia. It was six years since peace had been made, eight since the surrender at Yorktown. The hard-fought war was over. The splendid rejoicings were over. The soldiers had gone back home and had beaten their swords into reaping-hooks. It was a long time since that day in St. John's Church when Patrick Henry had thrilled his audience with 'Give me liberty, or give me death!' His hearers had been too deeply moved for applause, and they had sat silent for a space while those words seemed to be still ringing through the building. The speaker had led them up into a high mount, and they had seen a vision of glory and sacrifice. 'Let me be buried on this spot!' cried Colonel Edward Carrington, feeling that he had reached a spiritual height that he would never reach in life again.

Shortly after Yorktown a certain Mr. John Hook had bethought himself that some steers of his had been taken to feed the Continental Army, and that he had not been paid for the cattle. It was true that the soldiers had been very hungry, and that the commissary had been hard-pressed for food. Also it was true that the heroes who had fought and bled had not been paid, and that many patriots had sacrificed all in the common cause. No matter — Mr. John Hook wanted his money. He brought suit against the commissary who had taken his cattle, and the commissary retained Patrick Henry to defend him. The case had lingered long on the docket, but it finally came to trial. The court-house was crowded.

It would seem that the defense had not much to say. The facts, as stated by the plaintiff, were not contested. Mr. Henry's speech has come down to us in fragmentary form. He carried his hearers back to the stirring times of the war when a common danger had united all patriotic souls and a spirit of unselfishness had possessed them — when men had given freely of their blood and treasure, not counting the cost. Some had thrown their entire estates into the cause; some had laid down their lives. He painted the sufferings of the soldiers, half-starved and marking the frozen ground with the blood of their unshod feet. Then came the surrender at Yorktown, the wonderful relief after the dark hours of the struggle. The orator described the surrender, the humiliation of the foe marching out of the trenches, the joy of the worn and weary victors, the fraternal embraces and tears, the shouts of triumph, the bonfires and

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rejoicings. 'But hark, what notes of discord are these which disturb the general joy and silence the acclamations of victory? They are the notes of John Hook, hoarsely bawling through the American camp, "Beef, beef, beef!"'

The courthouse rocked with laughter. The clerk of the court, to preserve the dignity of his office, fled from the room and, when safely outside, threw himself on the lawn and rolled in uncontrolled merriment. The jury laughed until their sides ached, and when they got through laughing they brought in their verdict: 'One penny damages, and one penny costs to be paid by the plaintiff.' Later, when everybody had laughed so much that he could n't laugh any more, some rough spirits were heard talking about tar and feathers, and the best thing that John Hook could do was to get on his horse and ride swiftly away.

Surely a great injustice was committed that day. Mr. John Hook was a worthy citizen of credit and renown. By rights he should have been paid principal and interest. But the jury let themselves be carried away by their emotions. They were a foolish set of fellows, and suddenly the suit appeared to them a huge impertinence — an amazing revelation of selfishness. They were struck by the disproportion between Hook's sufferings and those of others. The money he was crying about was so infinitesimal compared to the great losses endured by others. They saw in imagination the long heart-breaking struggle and the great piled-up mass of human agony. The blood that had been shed and the lives that had been given could never be repaid — but Mr. John Hook wanted his money. It would have been tragic if it had not been comic. It was a thumping anticlimax to the story of the great war. After all the heroic adventures, the terrible battle, and the wonderful triumph, here comes the collector presenting his bill. The epic ends in a greasy ledger.

The simple, rude men of that heroic time laughed loud and long. For them Justice was not the classic goddess austerely blindfolded, but an open-eyed frontier lassie with a will of her own. Mr. John Hook was laughed out of court, and all because he wanted to collect a just debt. A derisive chuckle still lingers in the dusty records of the court, for the verdict was a joke — solemnly awarding a penny damages and then playfully taking it away for costs. So ends this story of a laugh.

In these civilized times John Hook would have had a better chance of getting his money. The world has grown more sober and sensible since those outrageous days of our youth. We do not laugh so easily and we do not jest when money is concerned. When Uncle Sam presents his bill to his comrades of the late war the discussions will, of course, be conducted with decent solemnity. No one will be so tactless as to compare money losses with human losses. No one will paint the picture of the trenches, showing the very blood upon the ground, and then suddenly project upon the scene the collector with his bill. No one would dare such an impertinence; and no artful orator will confuse men's minds and, by some hocus-pocus, make an honest man, seeking his own, appear sordid and base.

This is not the moment to bring up old stories of the war and to talk about Verdun and the wild night of the Armistice. That adventure is over. We are back on the plain of everyday life. The time has come to settle accounts.

Mr. John Hook wants his money — and there is no Patrick Henry to loose upon us the laughter of the world.

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MORE LEAVES FROM A SECRET JOURNAL

BY JANE STEGER

I

How much simpler the requirements of the spiritual adventure often are than we fear they may prove. He never took me half so seriously as I took my small conventional self. I used to be afraid that if I gave myself completely to Him He would demand something terrifying, like preaching at street corners from a soap box, distributing tracts, or nailing up placards — ARE YOU SAVED? — on telegraph poles, the very thought of which filled my quaking little soul with sheer panic because I was so self-conscious in those days that it took all the spiritual courage I could muster even to step out of the general crowd far enough to drop a coin in a Salvation Army kettle. I used to wonder if any revelation would ever make me brave enough to stand by the kettle and ring the bell in the face of the Christmas crowds. Now I could do it with delight, but in the old days it seemed an amazingly brave act. The fear of what I might be commanded to do held me back for a long time, but at last I did summon sufficient courage to make a surrender of obedience — not a very good one, it is true, but still a gesture toward Him, after which I waited in apprehension of the soap box and the tracts. Was I directed to them? *Not in the least.* Of course not! Who was *I* to convert the world when I was not even sure of my own conversion? Instead, the inner direction that I received — but so clear that I could not doubt it — was to tidy up my desk and bureau drawers! So overwhelmingly laughable in the face of what I had dreaded!

Yet, laughably simple as it was, I did not doubt then, nor do I now, that it was a genuine revelation of what I needed to cultivate. The very unexpectedness of it was convincing. I do not believe that 'order is Heaven's *first* law,' but it is undoubtedly a most important law, and one which I sin against frequently. If I was ever to do anything for Him, evidently the first step was to bring my small world into a more ordered state. The command has come again to me lately. I am not required to do anything great or spectacular, like preaching on street corners, for instance, or retiring into a convent, or embracing poverty, but only to bring more order into my everyday life. There is nothing symbolic about it. It is simply a practical direction, in the form of a strong desire, to put in order prosaic things, hang up garments, lay toilet articles straight, and tidy papers. In the carrying-out of it, however, it becomes a sacrament, an ideal for the whole of one's life, a first step in the Kingdom of Heaven — yet so very small and simple!

> If I could have a million stars,
> Ten whirlwinds and a sky,
> I'd make a song all thundering bars
> To shout His greatness by.
> But I have such a foolish mind,
> It moves me more to see
> His littleness, which chose to find
> The littleness of me.

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That was so often the way. He constantly answered my solemnity with an unexpected gayety. Sometimes I think God does not take religion so seriously as we do — at least not so seriously as a person of New England ancestry, like myself, does. Once, in a moment of complete surrender, I asked that I might be allowed to write something for Him. I petitioned it in a big solemn prayer, but afterward I forgot I had done so. These forgotten prayers, with what unexpected answers they sometimes come trailing home! I would be careful not to pray for anything unless I was very sure that I wanted it. I forgot this prayer, but He did not, and some time afterward there came to my mind every morning, just as I waked, flocks of verses. I did not understand at first where they came from, but later I realized. They poured out so fast that I could not get them all finished. As soon as I set about dressing one in words and rhyme, another would come singing through. They were so slight and whimsical, almost childish, how was I to guess He might answer a great solemn prayer with such fleeting gayety? (O Utter Love! You knew that was the way to own the last shred of my being!) I could worship and serve Him in reverent and distant awe, but if He chose to come in an intimate fellowship of mirth and song, then there was absolutely nothing of me that I would not give. We build absurd high altars to Him, when all the time He is there at the heart of life, companioning us in the smallest experiences.

I

Some little verses came one morn
Singing in my head:
Came before the day was born,
Bowed, and laughing said,
'Please get up and write us down,
For we are new to-day.
Please get up and weave our gown,
Ere we fade away.'

They made a sudden magic sign,
And all the east went red —
'Arise and spin the measured line,
For Love commands,' they said.

My Lord, my Life, I dare not guess
The verses whispered true;
Yet just in hopes I weave their dress,
And send them all to You!

II

I had a merry flight of songs,
But drove them all away,
For Love, I said, will scarcely wish
A gift so small and gay.
I'll take my tears, the dim dark tears,
And in their gray retreat
I'll hide my heart, and secretly
I'll lay it at His feet.

I took the tears, the stricken tears,
I made a gift of pain —
But never would You take my heart
Until it sang again!

III

As You have taught Arachne how to spin
Her fragile web from fairy reels within,
So, Gift-of-all-my-heart, Your dear commands
Draw from my soul's delight faint silver strands
Of song, frail wisps of love, all gemmed with You,
Like cobwebs, fret at dawn with drops of dew.

That was the first time the songs came. They have come many times since, and often so fast that I cannot finish one before another is there.

O Gift of Joy, on golden days
  When tides of love run strong,
Each thought flows out dew-decked with rhyme,
  And song pours after song.
My heart is like a secret spring
  In woodlands hid away,
At every touch from You there wells
  A whispered roundelay.
Fast as I catch the living stream
  In crystal cups of rhyme,
Fresh waters from the fount of life
  Gush forth in measured time.
I may not chalice them in words,
  So fast the songs break through —
But Love, my very self becomes
  A canticle of You!

II

For weeks I have been working by an upstairs window which looks straight

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into the heart of a green maple tree all in its new summer foliage. Most of the time the wind has been blowing through it. Its green effulgence ruffled under the wind is pure magic. As the branches go up, and then slide softly down, riding the waves of the wind, they seem to half-reveal a secret. At least it is a secret from me. There is much more there than a wind-tossed maple tree. So much more that if the tree were suddenly to burst into flame, burning without being consumed, like the bush out of which God spoke to Moses, I should hardly be surprised. It would all be in line with that tremendous Something which is there. However, it is not a change in the maple tree that is necessary in order that I may know the truth about it, but rather a change in me, an awakening of the spiritual self, a clearing of the inner vision. If I could only see a little further! I feel as though if I strained harder, if I looked and looked, I might understand; or even if I could find the right word, that might open the door. But I do not, and I have been looking at the tree for weeks, and seeing the wind toss the branches up and ride them softly down in long lines of absolute poetry — green poetry, wind poetry, ecstasy! If one could only put it into words!

Probably a few weeks is not a long enough time for looking at a tree. Years and years would hardly be enough. How amazing the leaves are! Green on top and silver-white underneath. Now, as I look, the wind is turning them over, one at a time here and there, in an abstracted way, — as I flutter the leaves of a book, — so that I can see the frosted silver underneath. But, of course, not in the least for me to see. It is all a private affair between the wind and the tree, and Something — Somebody — else. Yet I do feel that if I could see far enough I should know that I had a part in it too, that that Something which dresses Itself up in maple trees and wind had dressed Itself in me also. But I can't see far enough, or hear far enough — or, perhaps more truly, deep enough. My perceptions just can't reach it. But it is coming closer. Perhaps around the next corner of consciousness I shall come upon it. Perhaps I already know it, but, as with a good many other things, don't yet realize that I know it. Anyway it is much to know that something far more is there than just green leaves and wind on the surface of life. How blank the world would be if this feeling of other-whereness were to forsake me!

It would not be well, I imagine, to see too far all at once. Does n't something strange happen to the people who hear the Flute Player? And panic is derived — so an old teacher of mine used to tell me — from the fear of Pan. And when one goes to the Back of the North Wind one is never the same again. After that one never really cares again for the important things, like diamond necklaces, motor-cars, or a distinguished career, and so of course one is just ruined for real life. That 's why Blake's mother smacked him, when as a little boy he explained his lateness for supper by the statement that he had seen the prophet Ezekiel sitting in an apple tree. That's why, too, all the grown-ups made Thomas Traherne stop gaping at the miracle of everyday life, and feeling that 'the corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown,' but which 'had stood from everlasting to everlasting,' and that 'the dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold,' and finally induced him to believe that the tinsel on a hobbyhorse was a fine thing, and a purse of gold of value. But Thomas Traherne was a wayward spirit, and when he was grown and could be his own master he broke away

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from the tinsel idea — or, as he called it, 'the burden and cumber of devised wants' — and went off to live as he chose in the country, on a matter of ten pounds a year. Ten pounds, of course, does not buy much tinsel, so he was delivered from that and, thus set free, was enabled to make astonishing statements like 'You never enjoy the world aright till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens and crowned with the stars. . . . Till you sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold and kings in sceptres, you never enjoy the world. Till your spirit filleth the whole world, and the stars are your jewels . . . till you love men so as to desire their happiness with a thirst equal to the zeal of your own.'

Goodness! *He* would have known well enough what is going on in my wind-swept maple tree! Perhaps when I get across into the next world I can get him to tell me. But I want to know *now*, even at the risk of its destroying my taste for tinsel, and sounding brass, also tinkling cymbals. I think he might leave his celestial abode long enough to give me just a hint. I think a hint, coupled with the right word, would be sufficient. Or would it? Perhaps not. Perhaps what I need for illumination is to put money in its place as he did, and be content with ten pounds a year and a leathern suit. Besides, even if one returned from the dead, his message would have little meaning, unless the person to whom it came had already arrived at some conception of the truth. One must find it for one's self first. The outside revelation corroborates what one already knows. The kingdom of Heaven *is* within you — and its truth also. The only way to discover it, or to solve the mystery of the maple tree, is literally to inquire within. Doing so, one goes forth on the most amazing adventure that life offers — an adventure far more exciting than any expedition to the North Pole or into the heart of Africa.

As I look at the wind in the tree a little shiver of ecstasy goes through me because the vision is so close. Just the turning of a hair would bring it. What a mystery it is! What in the world makes those green leaves? Oh no, I don't want to know what they are composed of. A botanist might tell me that. What I want to know is why the sap ever started to run up the tree, up the trunk, along the limbs, into the buds, to spread them out into leaves. Perhaps the way to find out would be to get inside the tree one's self, a nebulous personality, to run with the sap up the trunk, out the limbs, into the leaves and maple keys, and there hear the command to stop. The end is as amazing as the beginning. Why does the urge of life cease with leaves and seed vessels? How does it know when to stop — when its type is completed? If this command to halt did n't come at the right moment the breath of life that is in the tree might go on beyond leaves and bloom into all sorts of green fantastic abortions that would spoil the type. The beginning is a marvel, the ending is an amazement. I suppose there was in the mind of God the finished thought of a maple tree, as definite and complete as is its spark of life in the seed, although He no doubt sent the thought forth in several types before the present one was achieved. It *is* a miracle that trees stop with themselves — that maple trees are only maple trees, apple trees only apple trees, and oak trees only oaks. The urge of life might so easily have flowed on into a green maelstrom of confusion, a sort of crazy-quilt of creation.

The same, of course, is true of every type. Why do pigs stop at pigs, and human beings at human beings? Oh, of course we human beings still have

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animal tendencies, and no doubt we are potential angels, but in spite of what we have been, or may be, we *are* human beings. Each type may have come up from something else, and be slowly drifting on to another development; nevertheless, at each stage it is itself, and not a confused medley. As I sit writing, I am surrounded by numberless finished articles, — books, chairs, tables, desk, — all of which were conceived by the mind of man. Then, as I look out into the garden, I see infinitely more things, — an innumerable company, grass, trees, flowers, bushes, — all of which the mind of God created, and all of which are separate, distinct, and finished, with no confusion, no intermixing of forms. Truly the finished type is an astonishment. I never really thought of it before. The urge of life always amazed me, but I never until now realized the marvel of its stopping when each creation is completed. It might so easily go on into confusion or shatter the type, as a child breaks his bubble by blowing too much breath into it. It might, that is, if at the back of creation was nothing but a blind force. How can anyone believe that! One might, possibly, if one thought only of the initial urge of life, but surely not when one sees it always stopping in definite forms and types.

Look at that fat dictionary over there on the shelf, so solemn and well informed — do I think a blind force created it? I do not. Then why should I suppose a blind force created the trumpet vine swaying out there in the wind? Did anybody ever see a trumpet vine forget its type and try to overflow into something else — into a maple tree, for instance? Or a maple tree forget that its urge to life should stop with sharply pointed leaves, rather than with the round edges of an oak? Nobody ever did, unless the types had been crossed by outside interference. What keeps them all so loyally true to their own plan? Surely if there were nothing but a blind urge at the back of them they would long ago have lost their way in the maze of life and gone off into a confusion of green grotesqueries.

But to come back to my maple. I would like to get inside of it and see what it feels like to be a tree. Perhaps I was a tree once long ago, at one stage of my journey from an atom to an angel. Perhaps I shall be again when I reach the superconsciousness of a Thomas Traherne. Then I should not need to stop short with trees, but could project my consciousness into anything else I wanted to, — into the sky, the sea, or the stars, — could be in them, and still be myself. Most of us do not realize the possibility of this extension of consciousness. Especially those of us who dread the survival of the personality after death. Heavens! Who would want to survive forever and ever in our present small earthworm personality! The mere thought of it fills me with desolation. But if one is to go on with unveiled face from glory unto glory, as Saint Paul says, then one may adventure with a high heart.

I can scarcely remember the time when I did not have this inexplicable yearning to get inside of growing things and taste, as it were, their consciousness. Perhaps the desire is a promise of an ultimate attainment.

Truly I must be mad, for often I knock
At the cool green portals of vines, of flowers, of trees,
Begging a dole, the gift to enter their lives.
Jewel weeds swaying there in the shade, handfuls
Of green-gold sun dotted down on their heads, inflame
My desire. I would be one of them, making my bow
To the wind, dabbling my leaves in and out of the sun,
Yellow blossoms for earrings, and anklets, and pendants to clash
In a faint and exquisite chime. And corn — Ah, God!

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What was the word You spoke in the heart of
the corn,
That the grains, so small, went laughing into
the dark
To leap out again, so green, so straight, and so
tall?
Ah, *what* was the word? Some day I fear I shall
spend
One penny of birth on the corn, just to know
what You said,
To stand in the heart of the field and exclaim
with my tall
Tasseled finger forever and ever at You. Perchance,
Adventuring all if I could stab straight through
This self, this hard imprisoned me, letting
My spirit's life gush forth, brimful, some green
And lovely basin like a field of corn —
Ah, then in flowing forth, the barriers down,
The door of self wrenched wide, heart open flung,
God's spirit might swirl in, possessing mine!

Green brothers, green brothers, I knock! Open
your hearts!
Ah, let me come in! Do not keep me forever
without!
See, I will give you great handfuls of love,
pressed down,
Running over. But no, they are wise, they will
not unbar.
Yet sometimes at dusk the bud babies open the
doors
A crack, to laugh, to peep out at me, kissing
And waving their little green hands. But when
I approach
There is never a chink to see, all is shut, fast
shut —
The crickets and I are alone in the dusk and
the dew.

III

This morning, just as I waked, I was conscious that the barrier, the feeling of separation, was gone. I was there. I was possessed of a larger life. I have often waked — sometimes in the morning, sometimes late in the night — with the sensation of His presence; but, wonderful as that was, there was always a bar between; long as I might to break through, it stood in the way. This morning the barrier was down — I was *there*. I cannot express with what utter delight the realization fills me. At the moment there was nothing surprising or particularly ecstatic about it — it merely seemed completely natural. But suddenly I realized that the walls were gone, that I was there at last; and in the moment of realization — of touching it with my waking thoughts — it vanished. It was with me only for the shortest possible time, but that it should have been there at all carries me away in joy and gratitude. Just for that fleeting moment I was at the journey's end, the haven where I would be, the destination toward which I have been traveling for so long. I did not deserve it. I had grown so slack, so desultory, in all my spiritual life, so distracted with surface activities and engrossed with things, that I had almost lost the hope that it would ever happen. Then, just when I least expected it and deserved it so very little, it came. Now I know that what the other travelers have said is true. They say that for a long time the soul stretches out to God in ardent longing, and then at last the order is reversed, and He comes to the soul.

The tide has turned. I had begun to fear that mine was not the temperament for the revelation, or else that I was on the wrong track and should change my life in some way — how, I did not know. But now a little realization has been vouchsafed, and I can continue to persevere with infinite delight. It has happened once, in spite of all my sins and my meagreness of spirit, and in good time it will happen again.

'It has come down, and it will come down, and I pray to the Lord to send it down.' This old revival hymn, which I have always sniffed at in my mind, takes on a fresh significance. What a fool I am! And how foolish is all our intellectual snobbery! We stand around in the aloof scornful places of the mind, looking at religious experiences from the outside, and then, *click!* a little

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door within opens, and out of our own knowledge we too behold new wine filling the old bottles of long-familiar words with a shining truth. 'Why, it was true all along!' we exclaim with a startled insight. Our shabby little minds should then go down in the dust and ashes of humility. Forever and forever there is more in life than the everyday intellect can lay hold of. 'It has come down' — it did this morning just for a minute. It was as though two halves in me which belonged together, but which were separated, had met at last. I was filled with a larger life in which my own smaller life was swallowed but not lost. Was it God and the soul meeting, or my conscious and subconscious, or superconscious, selves coming together? I do not greatly care which it was. After all, what do we really *know* about the subconscious mind? Not much more as yet than that it is a vast, unexplored, and amazing region within which may well be a gateway leading to God.

I think I now know a little of what Saint Paul meant when he said he lived in Christ — only a very little, of course. At the time, however, there was for me no particular sense of a personal God; only afterward a great rush of personal gratitude to Him, and an infinite feeling of shame and unworthiness. I never came so near to a conviction of sin. I see now why the real saints and mystics, who had such tremendously vivid spiritual experiences, set about repentance so avidly. If I had had a little further glimpse, I too might have sufficient grace and vigor to dislodge the unworthy devils who have so long accompanied me. In His light the small desires and selfishnesses appear infinitely tawdry. And how it does take the arrogance out of material things! They are no longer engrossingly important, and yet, for some reason, in the light of the spirit one may enjoy them more than ever. Is this, I wonder, being 'free to enjoy'?

I feel a great content now to rest in His good time, and a conviction of things being done for me outside of my small self. With delight I will continue to endeavor to do my part, but for some reason I feel a little as though the burden of it rested now more with God than with me. Probably it always did, only I never realized it before.

This experience, which seems so small when I put it down and yet means so much to me, as appearing to be a definite step along the way I have been trying to follow, has come when youth is over. It fills me with delight to see how the spirit continues to unfold after the mind and body have reached maturity. Development of the physical and mental comes to an end fairly early, but one may grow in grace forever. This is the great adventure which keeps one young and expectant. Nothing in the youth of the mind or body, for me at least, was half so interesting and joyful as the awakening of the spirit. The theory that religious experiences are merely an attribute of physical adolescence is amusing.

It is curious how frequently these little extensions of perception come just at waking. We are inclined to think that something wholly new has come to us, but it just occurs to me that the real truth may be that as we develop along these lines we become more and more capable of bringing into our waking consciousness the things which we are aware of when we are deeply asleep. I think that when our physical faculties are in abeyance we ourselves become pure spirit; but the adventures of this state we cannot as a rule remember, because they are obscured, as we return into the body, by a stratum of surface dreams. These surface dreams, which the psychologists are so excited over nowadays, are

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designed, I believe, among other things, to close the doors of memory between the two worlds. If the consciousness of this other existence down beneath the veils of sleep came to us without due preparation, our minds would doubtless go to pieces under the strain of the double experience.

Sometimes when one is not getting on well with another person, and the everyday selves seem to be in a snarl of antagonism, — for often the spirit finds the endeavor to realize through matter heavy sledding, — things may be improved by a desire, just as one falls asleep, to meet the other person on the spiritual plane, and there come into harmony with each other. So often disagreements are merely antagonisms of the small material selves. I find the following note made some years ago: —

'The other night I was unhappy about someone, and prayed that when I was asleep this person and myself might meet in our deeper selves and understand each other better. Just as I dropped into sleep, I felt as though something streamed out of my side in a flood of being which seemed really tangible. I thought it was myself, going forth, just as my physical faculties lost consciousness, in a flood of affectionate desire to help and understand and be at peace with the one I was unhappy over. It may, of course, have been only a dream, but it did not seem like one. It seemed like a real occurrence, and since then that other person and I have been happier together.'

To-morrow is a silver trumpet that I shall blow upon.
It is unknown, it is unborn;
It is coming to me through the dark of to-night.
To-day I know, and yesterday I have known,
But the day which waits on the other side of the dark tunnel
Is all unknown —
It is completely new,
And I shall meet it with a new spirit.
It is a miracle, a possibility, a gem —
It is a clear crystal in which I shall mirror myself.
God swings it to me from out the mysterious future.
For a moment I hold it in the hand of to-day,
Then I swing it down the past stamped forever
With an image and superscription of myself.
For an instant it is mine,
All untouched and untried, as clear as a dewdrop,
Ephemeral as gossamer on the grass.
Oh, ecstasy of to-morrow!
The dead past has buried its dead,
And all the world is new!
You are a silver trumpet that I shall blow upon,
Making of you new songs, gay songs,
Melodies never heard before.
I stand for one moment, tiptoe
On the edge of the future,
Gazing upon the wonder of the approaching gift;
Then I plunge
Down the dark tunnel of sleep.
Life is a golden chain
Strung with to-morrows,
And at the end
Is the great to-morrow of death.

IV

Winks of beauty. There is the mystery of it dodging in and out of life all the time — 'half guessed and gone again.' Such slight things, but so startling with the stab of joy they give. Just little things that one scarcely notices, would not notice at all if it were not for that thrill of ecstasy. Sparrows bathing in a city fountain, flowers spilling out into the street from a florist's shop, the flirt of a squirrel's tail when he hops, the solemn way Negro children roll the whites of their eyes, the lovely mirth on the face of a white primrose — all so slight, so fleeting, yet the very heart of life, compounded of love, of mirth, and of — well, we call it beauty, but I fancy that 's because we don't know exactly what to call it. It seems to me of much more value and importance than so-called beauty, because so frequently it presents itself under an aspect that is not conventionally beautiful. There's my little Negro maid, for instance. She has a big

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mouth and a flat nose, and yet that mysterious something, value, beauty, ecstasy, — *other-whereness*, as I sometimes call it, — is constantly winking in and out of her. It may be because of the grace of her soft movements, or it may be because she sometimes wears a yellow dress, and her little brown neck coming out of her frock is wholly appealing. Yet it does not seem to be quite either of these things. It is something that does not go into words, and no doubt I make a mistake in endeavoring to express it with them. Probably its real medium is color and line, or music: words bring in the element of thought too much, and are too concrete. The trouble may be with myself, because possibly I am an artist gone astray. As a child my great passion was drawing, but circumstances and my handicap made the carrying-out of that desire impossible. So I suppose I have more the artistic response to life than the literary one, — if there is a fundamental difference between the two, which of course is open to question, — and so I am at cross-purposes with my medium, always trying to force into words that which belongs to the brush. However, even the most successful artist is never completely satisfied with his attempt, feeling always that something more which no medium can interpret; and after all I might have found the brush as unsatisfactory as the pen, so there is no good in indulging myself in a 'gentle melancholy' over the buried artist in me.

It is curious that I get this thrill of beauty, or value, or whatever one may call it, in Negroes more frequently than in white people. Perhaps it is because they are more primitive, and artificiality dims the thrill. I had another Negro maid once — a small brown, almost black, woman — who had a whimsical sense of humor. In memory I can see her now, down on her knees scrubbing some steps. I made a small joke, and all her little body doubled in curves of laughter. She had a way when she went to the spring — blue frock moving down the garden path — of always presenting one with an offering of fresh water. 'Will you has a drink of nice fresh water?' she would say, holding out the silver-frosted glass. No sophisticated cup of tea was ever presented to me with half the appeal of this simple offering. Goodness, what is the matter with us! We seem to be forever destined to seek the ornate, and yet it draws us away from the underlying ecstasy of life. Still the desire for elaboration of existence must have some real reason in it or it would hardly be so persistent. A strange world, and humanity the strangest thing in it!

As I think of it now, there is something notable in the attitude of Negroes toward water. Water appears to mean more to them than it does to members of the white race. They pay it a tribute of respect. Good water, spring water, a bucket of fresh water — these are exclamation points of satisfaction in their lives. As I look back in memory I see a long procession of Negro servants in our family performing this rite of going to the spring. There was one old woman who used to carry three buckets of water at a time, one on her head and one in either hand. The great dignity of her figure thus laden comes back to me now with a thrill of pleasure. There was another one who would sometimes set down her buckets wearily on the path and, looking up at the immense sky, cry out in a kind of protest, 'Father in Heaven, look down, do, pray!' When we played in the kitchen as children we might take almost any liberty provided we respected the water buckets. It is spring water that is especially

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reverenced; rain water not so much so, except that it is a gift from on high; and creek water is negligible. But spring water, pure and undefiled, is sacred. It is, as well, almost the only gift of hospitality that Negroes are permitted to offer to members of the white race. Perhaps this is symbolic, a prophecy that their simple and mystical faith may sometime renew the wellsprings of religion for the more sophisticated of us.

But to come back to the winks of beauty. Artificiality appears to break the connection with that Something More which seems to me to furnish that especial sense of joy. I can see a hundred thousand young painted faces go by in the city streets with never a flicker of delight — and then be enchanted by the grace of an old countrywoman's hands. People are more beautiful against the background of nature, and nature — at least cultivated nature — appears to need them. My garden never seems so lovely to me as when people walk about in it. They seem to be the climax for which it waited. Really I think what I am trying to define is more poignancy than beauty — a sudden sharp aspect that stabs one awake. It is the Spirit glinting in and out of life. Never really out of it, of course, but for us never as yet fully realized. He is there behind the veil of it all, but some places in the veil are thinner than others, so that through them we glimpse Him more distinctly. Loopholes into reality.

Such unexpected glimpses in unlooked-for places! I remember a boy — a rough, unmannerly, smart-Alecky boy. 'Smart, smart, smart, you can't fool *me*,' was written all over him. But suddenly I caught a glimpse of the curve of his young shoulder looking out through a rent in his shirt — so young, so appealing, such a surrender, completely betraying all the rest of him; as if God had for one instant broken through, completely destroying all the cheap surface, and setting upon the whole the stamp of a divine creation.

Another time I was looking out of a car window, staring idly at a man who was leaning against the wall of the station where our train had stopped. The man seemed to me wholly uninteresting, and then all at once there was something about the fold of his rough coat at his neck that was miraculous. Now how absurd that sounds! Yet all I know is that it was true. Just the fold of a coat, an old coat covering an apparently uninteresting man; that was all it was at first, and then suddenly it was a revelation. It was the whole of humanity coming down out of the ages, — its sorrow, its wistfulness, its struggles, its divinity, — all epitomized for one instant in the fold of a garment. And such economy! Not even the whole coat used — just the fold by the man's neck. Some great artist in words or music could have interpreted it, but I could not — I could only see it and wonder. The eyes of my mind have stared at it through all the years since, remembering that wink of illumination, but never quite understanding it. Was it just the pathos of it? Or was it that I glimpsed the absolute garment? Or again was it that, as the man was in the coat, so God is in all life? I do not know. It might have been all of these things, for, by the sudden twist of Something More with which the sight was infused, I knew it was a pathway leading deeper into life, only I had not the spiritual sight or hardihood to follow it. How deficient I am! To see constantly, yet not understand, not be able to push on to the full revelation! 'Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.'

Sometimes, however, the deeper meaning of these moments of revelation comes to me later. I think I

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understand now the experience I had in crossing the street once in New York. There were, of course, crowds of people, and so there was some concern on my part about doing my own small navigating successfully. Then all at once there was that sense of something deeper present, and a feeling that if I let go all would be well. I did. I relaxed, giving over my surface tension and letting myself float into the tide of people as a swimmer gives himself to the water. It all went simply and easily then. But there was much more to it than the simple surface fact. It was as though for a moment I had caught the undercurrent of the crowd, its rhythm, and so could move in it, be carried easily and naturally by it. I had found my place, and fitted in like a note in a piece of music. I think this small experience might be true for all of life. Under everything we do there is probably this great life-giving undercurrent, the spirit of each activity, but we usually fail to perceive it. If we could get into touch with it more frequently, all of life would move much more easily for us. We should not then sail such choppy seas. We might catch the tune, so to speak, in everything — in people as well as in activities. But to do so one must let go of one's surface self, and make at least a little gesture toward the spiritual. Let go, let go — that seems to be the constant command. Let go of the surface anxiety, the terrible snatch and scramble and fear of getting left in some way, and reach out toward the spiritual. If one dared to let go, one would drop only a little way, yet that little way might carry one into a whole new aspect of life. It was what Christ was always proclaiming — a losing of one's life to save it, a surrender to the life more abundant. But the initial attempt must come from ourselves, although no doubt the Holy Spirit instigates us to it.

V

Sometimes one withdraws for a moment into one's self, stepping aside from all of one's own intense activity to look on in amazement at the great pageantry of life flowing past.

Marching and marching, from one side out of the dark
Of my mind to the flare of its lighted spaces, and thence
Lost in the wings on the left, existence unrolls,
An enchanted parade, an endless rhythmic wave,
A melody woven of color, of laughter, of tears,
A rainbow intoxication, animals, birds,
Flowers, and people. Drunk with the sight, I am mad
To live all lives, to string them upon myself,
Millions of beads on one continuous strand.
I think before I was born the face of my soul
Must have peered and peered through the gorgeous windows of life,
Like a child peeping in at a toy shop, bewildered by all
The rich display, and uncertain how to invest
His penny. Well, my penny of birth is expended,
But now, walking the aisles inside of the shop,
I see laid out an endless assortment of lives —
Sad lives, gay lives, broken lives, woolly-dog lives,
Grotesque jumping-jack lives. I do not care —
Everything that hath breath praises the Lord; and I?
I desire them all, not to handle and touch, but to live,
To be there at the heart, at the quick of each breath. But how
Could one ever obtain such a madness and wonder of life?

The spirit of life is through it all, and life is God, and God is love — ecstasy! Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father in Heaven — of course not! How could it, since He is there at its very heart? Call not thou anything common or unclean — oh, I will not! I will not! I will hold the vision clear. The Kingdom of Heaven has come nigh unto you. It is all about, here and now, in every human being walking the streets, in every sparrow flying, in every green leaf blowing in the wind. In every living thing it is here

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before us, is surging up to us in every act of life. How stupid I am, how blind most of the time! But to-day my eyes are open; I am moving in the mystery of life. I must hold the vision, recapturing it every morning, every day plunging it more and more into each act of life. I see how all of life should be glorified by the realization of this life more abundant, pouring it into every activity, re-creating all with joy. But as yet the vision is fleeting, so hard to hold, so difficult to carry through into all one's busy life. It is like cobwebs on the grass. One sees them distinctly in the early morning, gradually fading as the sun advances, but renewed again the next day. The vision comes to me again and again, but it is lost in the heat of life's activities, even in the simple activities of the life I lead. Why am I so inept in carrying it through? It is the amazing adventure — behold the vision, then try to clothe it in the garment of life. Nothing too small for it, nothing too big. When one tries to put it into life, one knows the poet's despair and delight in endeavoring to put pure poetry into words. The vision is there; one struggles to interpret it; but the hardness and selfishness of circumstances carry it all awry, just as words with their inflexibility break the fleeting gift of poetry into something hard and concrete. Yet the attempt must be made.

If we are ever to rest in pure vision, it is not now. Now it must be brought into active life in some way, through some one of the endless channels which offer. The effort is the thing. If it is bungling and unsuccessful, — as it is almost certain to be, for the vision must always be far above its realization, — no matter. The attempt has been made; you have taken a hand in the great game; some other player sees, knows what you are about, and is stimulated, as you have been stimulated by his effort. 'I know! I know!' he cries out across the murk and failure. 'Oh, I know what you have attempted. It is my game also, the greatest game in all life — the very heart of life itself!'

The spirit may be utilized in all the ways of existence, once it has found an entrance into the world, but the entrance, in human lives at least, must be through the opening of the heart. That is the everlasting door that the psalmist cries upon to be lifted up. 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in!' When one makes an attempt to lift up the everlasting door, through the offering of one's small self in prayer and meditation as one sinks into deeper and deeper levels of consciousness, of self-surrender and stillness, one becomes aware at times of a sensation of rhythm, almost of half-guessed music, as if just beyond this utter silence there surged a tide of melody waiting for an opening through which to pour itself.

Oh, shout! Oh, shout, ye sons of God!
And shawms of joy reply,
To lift the everlasting door,
To throw it wide and high;
That He, the King of Glory,
Who is the King of Song,
May enter in with laughter
Where melodies belong!
Oh, lift it up — the heart of man,
That gate so long held fast —
Oh, beat it down with melody,
With joyous blast on blast!
Throw wide, throw wide the secret way
To all the hosts of God,
That through the world their shining feet
May march with music shod!
For now I know! I know, O Heart!
I know it deep and strong —
Through the distant wall of silence
Waits Love, which is a song!

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HAKLUYT UNPURCHASED

BY FRANKLIN McDUFFEE

Man is a fool and a bag of wind!
Or was it madness that stopped my buying
The old brown Hakluyt I chanced to find
At twelve and sixpence, dustily lying

With shilling shockers? An if 't were here
I'd kick off shoes and pull on slippers
And settle back to my brier and beer
For a windy voyage with Hakluyt's skippers.

Up the blue sea and down the sky
To Java Head or warm Cipango,
With albatrosses floating by
And a wind that whistles of spice and mango;

Into the ice with Frobisher's men,
Or south with Raleigh to seek Guiana,
In the Jesus of Lubeck with Hawkins then
To plunder the dons of smug Habana,

And east. . . . But my ale is dregs and lees,
My pipe won't draw, and I, besotted,
The sport of devils — I failed to seize
On the rich old tome till another got it.

And so, instead of an offshore gale
And a tropical sea and a lion skipper,
I sit and blow at my mug of ale
And stare at a toe through a toeless slipper.

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THE MEETINGHOUSE AND THE LABORATORY

BY A WOMAN PHYSICIAN

One of my early memories is of a church, a brick church with a long, broad flight of steps leading up to a big bare churchroom — and at the front of this room three tall Christmas trees decorated with tinsel and cotton, with candles ready for the lighting. The trees were arranged in a triangle with the centre one at the back. Of the mechanics of those three trees I have a vivid memory, because I was to be the golden-haired angel with a starry crown, standing on a platform higher than my father's head — an angel with one hand poised beneath the dove of peace, and the other extending an olive branch. After I was poised the outer trees were to be swung back by a scissor arrangement to disclose the angel.

It seemed strange that God and the minister should want a little girl to wear a white nightgown, and no shoes or stockings, in the church. It made the little girl's heart beat very hard and fast.

They were lighting the candles when the cotton caught on fire, and there was almost a stampede among the audience. My sister and her nurse were pushed down the long front steps, and people were knocked down. After the excitement was over and the candles safely lighted, the angel was put on the platform — a little girl not over four years old, with one outstretched hand holding a spray of leaves, and the other touching a white dove that gently swayed on its wire. The outer trees were moved aside, and red-fire flares lighted. As the flares blazed up, terror struck to the heart of the frightened child, and with a wild cry for her father she leaped from the platform into his arms, and the dove of peace still swayed from the tree. There was no thought of God or any heavenly protection. I do not believe that religion is inherent in the human soul or that it is an hereditary factor. It is the result of training and of the need for something by which one may live.

Religion, temperance, and politics were a sad mixture in my childish mind, because at that same time I remember being put on the big church platform to recite 'Have courage, my boy, to say No,' at a temperance rally; and then, not knowing how to get off the platform, I stood there and cried at the top of my voice until mother came and lifted me down — that was church again. Then I remember a political parade, with torches, celebrating the reëlection of our Congressman, Colonel Pete Hepburn, after a defeat four years before. Mary held me on a fence post and mother marched well at the head of the parade with a little flag; and the old man standing next to me kept shouting, 'Praise God!' — so that was religion, too. I thought one had to be good to be allowed to carry the flag in a big parade. This was Western Iowa in the early eighties.

Prayer meant nothing to me in my very early childhood — it was pieces to be spoken in a certain way and at certain times, without any personal connection. The first time I really prayed a prayer of my own was when I was six

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years old — and then I prayed for something that I knew was wrong, and my prayer was granted.

Mother and the baby had been at grandfather's for some months because Aunty Belle was very ill there, and all that winter I was alone with my father and Mary, who took care of the house and me and of my father and the horse and the cow, and I wanted mother to come home. So I went out into the barn, knelt down, squeezed my eyes tight shut, and prayed aloud that Aunty Belle might die so that mother and the baby would come home. And Aunty Belle did die — almost immediately, as I remember now.

Mary told me very gently, but I went out into the barn to rejoice. I knew I must pretend to be sorry, so when I came back into the house my face was solemn, and I cried. Even to this day, after almost forty years, I can always bring tears when I really want to laugh by thinking, 'Aunty Belle is dead.'

A long time afterward I asked mother whether God would answer a prayer if you asked for something wrong, and she said, 'Of course not!'

The Bible was traditional in our household. Aunt Martha had read the Bible through before she was six, they said. I tried to do it, but was interrupted when we moved, and I doubt if now I have ever read all of it — I have a bad habit of skipping all the 'begats.' Our family is old Covenanter Scotch, and during the summer-time we lived with grandfather and grandmother, who were strict United Presbyterians. Sunday was always the Sabbath, and on that day no unnecessary work was done. We sang Psalms ('Sams'), not hymns. The church was bare and forbidding except for the sunlight through the stained-glass windows. There were no cushions on the uncomfortable pews. We heard long sermons on doctrine, and no music except the Psalms and a choir without accompaniment. We belonged to the more progressive church — the second church which split off from the first because those in the first church held that it was ungodly to start the choir with a pitch-pipe instead of a *do-me-sol-do* which might be pitched too high or too low. I loved some of the Psalms: —

By Babel's streams we sat and wept
For mem-em-em-ory still-ill-ill to Zion clung
The wind alone our harp strings swept
That a-a-on the droo-oo-ooping willows hung.

We were not allowed to read anything but the Bible on the Sabbath, our meals were cold, and we might not go buggy-riding or play. We were taught that God was a righteous God, and that He was ever waiting to visit His wrath on His children. Hell was close ahead — the true Biblical version.

At this time there is the memory also of family worship night and morning. Grandfather's house was on one crest of the double-crested hill, and two hundred yards across the road on the other crest was great-grandfather's house, where he lived with great-grandmother; and as a child I always wanted to go across the road for evening worship, for just as the darkness began to fall we would hear faintly the quavering voices singing a Psalm. We did not sing at worship at grandfather's. We had a reading from the Bible and then a prayer. Grandfather had two basic prayers, one for morning and one for evening, with little personal variations each day. I did not always understand all the words — they went so fast, always ending 'command sin and sickness to proper distance from us, and command Thy blessing upon us, for Thine is the power and glory forever. Amen.'

Family worship and blessing before we might partake of food are always tinged with the picture of grand-

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mother sitting on the edge of her chair, ready to run to the kitchen, saying, 'Just say a short blessing, Pa — I'm afraid my chicken will burn,' or 'Make it a short reading — I want to get to my washing early,' and scarcely waiting for the Amen to be said.

The forms of religion were closely observed, and I believe grandfather and grandmother lived this religion all the time. It was not a comforting one; there was always the fear of things undone which should have been done. I grew up with this outward religious form — and no conception of what it really meant. My soul was untouched by any divine flame.

And then we moved to Chicago, to a block with forty-four children in it, when I was almost nine. Sabbath changed. We slept late, went to Sunday School at almost noon, came home to an especial Sunday dinner; then, in the afternoon, we went driving through the parks. The minister was young and interesting, — he tried to hold the children, — and he has since done worlds of good in his ministry in Chicago. He offered a prize of five dollars to the child who would make the best abstract of one of ten sermons he was giving. I won the five — chiefly because I had a good memory, to which were added a few surreptitious notes. He made an appeal that the Sunday School did not. We were a pert, sophisticated lot of children — at least those in my class. We constantly kept the banner for attendance, but we refused to repeat any verses or sing any songs in which, as little materialists, we did not believe. We doubted everything. Our superintendent was very fond of one song, 'At the Cross,' which used to be on page ninety of our songbook. We would sing lustily except for one line, 'For such a worm as I.' We were not worms, so why tell a lie? Always, on that line, the volume of song diminished half. I suppose it was well to become a worshiper of truth, but it was hard on the Sunday School morale.

When I was twelve I had a big decision to make, all by myself: whether I would agree with mother or with father. It was too big a problem for a child to solve, so I decided to go to see our minister. I timidly got to the front door and rang the bell. He came and, without inviting me in, asked what I wanted. I could not ask my question on the doorstep, so I said 'Nothing,' and went down his steps. It was the only time I had ever asked for help, and it was my last attempt at presenting a problem of my own to a minister for solution. I will present other people's troubles, but for myself I wait for time and thought to solve my difficulties.

I felt that the church had not functioned properly, and I did not join it with the other children of my class.

It was somewhere in this interval of time that a cousin of mother's, the pastor of a Brooklyn church, came to visit us. He was a man distinctly ranking himself superior to the rest of us. The first morning he was there Cousin Nelse suggested family worship, which we had discontinued in our Chicago household. Our schedule provided for breakfast and school without much leeway. My sister and I knelt by the window and watched the children going to school, while Cousin Nelse prayed on and on — for all the sinful family, beginning with great-grandfather and his six or eight real children and the four adopted ones, on down through the littlest babies; for the governments, from the national to the ward politicians; for missionaries in all foreign countries; for protection from all the conceivable ordinary and extraordinary forms of sin; and my sister and I, kneeling, watched the children go to school and heard the school-bell ring. We had never been late before. Mother wrote

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us each a note explaining that our visitor had prayed so long at family worship that we had to be late. I started off to school, but did not go, because I could not give that explanation to the teacher. It was my first truancy.

Through college I led a carefree life, without religious influence. It was a state university. I glibly signed my church preference — went occasionally, and did some work with the Y. W. C. A. There was nothing in college to disturb any religious views I might have had. Biology, evolution, and embryology did not offer any disturbing conflicts. I could still fit them to my Bible by stretching my six days of creation over a tremendous span of time, as some Biblical authorities claimed. As I think of it now, there were no influences either for or against religion in my college life. It was a neutral ground. I once learned at a Y. W. C. A. meeting that white lies were 'sin spots — freckles — on the soul.'

After college I drifted, against my better judgment and against my wishes, into teaching. The first year I taught science in a high school in a little town in Eastern Illinois. This town was a close community of people who had intermarried until sometimes I wondered if there was anyone there aside from myself who was not related to at least one fourth of the town. We had two trains a day — one in, one out — and we were the end of the railroad branch. In a community like this, religious sentiment is strong. My superintendent was superintendent of the Methodist Sunday School, and he requested firmly that I attend church regularly in order that I might be a good example — and I did. He was a good-natured, stolid, round-faced man with rosy cheeks, whose favorite song was 'Jesus wants me for a sunbeam.' We had it every Sunday, down through the chorus. Then he would say: —

'Let 's have that chorus again, and this time I want every *girl* in the audience to sing this — big girls, little girls, old girls, young girls — every girl in this room help sing this chorus.'

And in a high falsetto we would all sing: 'Jesus wants me for a sunbeam.'

'That 's fine,' he would say. 'Now every *boy* in this audience — big boys, little boys, old boys, and young boys — every boy help sing this chorus!'

And in a deep bass would come, 'I 'll be a sunbeam for Him.'

'That 's fine, but it 's better with all of us together. Now, all together, let 's sing the chorus once more!'

Each chorus was sung some four or five times, sometimes left side, sometimes right side, sometimes grown-ups, sometimes children, sometimes men, and sometimes women, but always all together at the end.

That is my memory of a year at that Sunday School.

That church holds another recollection, that of my first revival. Our little town was not far from the coal-mining districts, and something had happened to the city wells — they had all gone dry or become alkaline and corrosive — so that, to run the electric plant, water was hauled fourteen miles, in tanks, from an old coal-mine. This particular week we were to have an evangelist who was widely known and a singer whose reputation had spread over the Middle West, for an interdenominational revival. They organized a choir of fifty voices and, again at the superintendent's request, I volunteered. The first three nights went beautifully. We practised singing 'Come, sinner, come!' — just that one phrase over and over again, very softly, but very distinctly and slowly. The fourth night the pump at the mine had broken down and there was no water for the electric-light plant. The entire town was without electric lights.

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I wish I could picture that big dark church, with the high-vaulted ceiling, lighted by about a dozen flickering oil-lamps that threw only a little circle of light and made the open space beyond it darker than ever. We sang from memory. A tiny lamp lighted the pulpit desk, but the evangelist stepped beyond its rays and preached like an artist, taking the key from his background. He preached Hell. 'Hell,' he said, 'is a place where one is in eternal darkness. It is like the tunnels in the coal-mine, all black-dark, with a lone soul at the end of each blind tunnel shut up in total blackness for all eternity, isolated from all other souls, eternally lonesome, in eternal silence, meditating on the sins he has committed, trivial sins, little sins, and big sins, for all the rest of time — alone in absolute silence and absolute darkness.'

You could feel the terror sweep over the congregation as he paused, and the very silence seemed audible. Then his voice rose clear and like a trumpet: 'All of you who do not want to go to this Hell — rise!' And like a wave the congregation rose to its feet. The choir remained seated and he turned to us with the same question — and with one exception they all stood. I was the exception. It was sinful, I felt, for each man to make up his own form of Hell, for 'if any man shall add unto these things —'

The choir was seated after an instant, and then sang slowly and softly 'Come, sinner, come' over and over until the entire congregation that packed the church had marched by and taken the evangelist's hand, with a promise of reform. When the choir had finished and we were going out, the man leaned over and said directly to me: 'I want to see you when the rest are gone.'

The church emptied and there I was alone on the platform. He placed a chair at the front for me and one opposite for himself, so he could look into my eyes. The lights were growing dimmer and more flickering. The sexton put them out in the back. Off to the left sat the retired minister and his wife with whom I lived. Their heads were bowed and they were praying softly and yet audibly for me and my soul. In the dark centre of the church sat one of my nicest high-school boys waiting to take me home, and 'way in the back stood the lady who planned the music, waiting for directions for the next night. She was standing, holding a heavy sleeping baby in her arms.

For two hours that evangelist sat and faced me. I told him I believed in God and in Christ's teaching; but he told me, in a low voice that reached only my ears, that I should never be able to get married, — no one would have me, — that I could never hold any responsible position and that I should lose my present job, that my mind would grow weaker and weaker, that my health would be lost, and that many other horrible things would certainly happen to me if I did not join the church. Two long hours we sat on that platform with his eyes glued on mine. 'You are yielding,' he would say, 'you are just ready to come — you will rest to-night in the arms of Jesus'; and I would draw myself back with a start, realizing that always I had felt that joining a church must be like love — a great overpowering thing that would come over my soul and make it impossible to do anything but join the church. Never, I thought, could my church connection be forced by fear or by an artificially stimulated emotion. It must be a deliberate decision.

It was long after twelve when I tore my eyes away from his — his eyes that seemed to hold me so I could not think, so I could hardly tell what he was saying — and forced myself to rise from the chair. I told him I would think it

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over and write him a note the next day.

The old minister and his wife came to take me home, convinced that my soul was safe. The lady with the sleeping baby came wearily to the platform, and the high-school boy followed ten feet behind the minister, his wife, and myself — followed all the way home, although he lived at the opposite end of town. After we entered the house I was forced to enter the living-room for some more prayers. I was just twenty when this happened. I never did get married, and I did lose my job that year, but not as a result of his prophecy. I wrote a little note saying I was sorry but it would be impossible for me to sing in the choir for the rest of the week.

This experience, which should never have been allowed to happen, left a scar so deep that it was years before I went into any church affairs. I occasionally attended a service, but took no part in church activities.

Some five years afterward I received an offer to head a department in a denominational school for girls in one of the oldest Southern states. It was a Methodist Episcopal college. The president wrote and asked me for my church affiliations. I wrote back that I was not a church member, but that I was a Christian and would be willing to attend church, and that I should never influence the religious views of the students. Strangely enough I got the appointment. In a characteristic letter this same president wrote me that he had an application from a perfectly good Methodist from Virginia, but she gave no evidence of being able to teach science; and another from an excellent science-teacher from Tennessee, but she was a Baptist and he had all the Baptists he could stand on his faculty; so the Board of Trustees had decided to appoint me.

This president was the broadest-minded, fairest minister with whom I have had the privilege of working. His chapel talks were simple straightforward talks on the ordinary things of life, — our relationships with each other, honesty, morality, — and he preached that each one was a model for someone else, that every day and every minute of our conduct were important, that our girls were training for leadership, and that it must be the highest type of leadership. There was never any attempt to influence my religious views. I even taught evolution under the heading of Theoretical Biology, without a textbook, correlating it so that there could be no religious conflicts raised; making it modern evolution, the changing of species with the development of hereditary qualities that better fitted the group to a changing environment; explaining in words of one syllable that Darwin did not say we are superior monkeys. Those four years came the nearest to developing a religion for me of any years in all my life so far. The admission to the school of one girl who was expelled from another college for stealing crystallized my conception of religion into a doctrine of helpfulness, giving a fellow another chance, forgiveness, and real love. The president said, speaking of this girl: 'She is young and has made a mistake, but if we give her a chance she will win her own salvation.'

The God of the South was a gentle God, and a God who was very constantly a daily force — not just a God of the Sabbath day.

Just below the college there was an old man — with the calmest face I have ever seen, a face that was alight with an inner glow — who had received 'the gift of tongues' and was 'sanctified.' Sanctification was a great gift for him: he was beyond all temptation in this world, he was one with God, and all desire for wrong things was gone. I would give much for a belief like that.

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During all these twenty-five years, the life after death was a puzzle to me. I was not sure, never sure during all those years, that there was anything more. How could we be made in the image and likeness of God, and then cast off our earthly shell and have the spirit go to Heaven or Hell in the same likeness? Was n't the soul that strange physico-chemical thing we call life, that flickered out in this form to be preserved as an energy that might furnish the magic spark to create a new life? Was there an independent life after death?

And then I came North, into an anatomy room, to study. The dead body meant nothing at all to me. I could not visualize the man or woman it might have been. Life left few records on those immobile faces. For weeks I worked, and each day the wonder grew; and then, one day, I was working on an arm and hand, studying the perfect mechanical arrangements of the muscles and tendons — how the sheaths of certain muscles are split to let the tendons of other muscles through, that the hand may be delicate and small and yet powerful. I was all alone in the laboratory when the overwhelming belief came: a thing like this is not just chance, but a part of a plan, a plan so big that only God could have conceived it. Religion had been a matter of form, a thing without convictions, and now everything was an evidence of God; the tendons of the hand, the pattern of the little blue butterfly's wings — it was all part of a purpose. There must be a life after death. What it is we may not vision; we are not able to conceive it — any more than I am able to convey to anyone else my own exact conception of a color or a sound. Is my red your red? Is my middle C yours? Or do you have overtones and vibrations which my ear cannot receive?

And here began my religious philosophy. I know there is a ruling power, which, for lack of better name, we call God. I know there is something coming after death, and I believe the Christian system of things gives us the best guide by which to govern our present life. I have no quarrel with any church denomination, or with any religion. I have no desire to force my views on any other person; but I do wish to emphasize the fact that for each of us religion must come as a personal revelation, and it must come differently to each of us — it is not necessarily marked by the function of joining a church.

Death is a strange thing, for which religion must account. I never saw anyone die until four years ago. I had seen old people and invalids and insane people clinging hard to life, begging for more years here, but never actual death. I thought the strongest thing in life was the desire to live. Then I saw a man die. He was badly hurt, and had suffered for days. I went into his room just as we thought he was growing better. It was very quiet. He was not moaning, and there was a smile on his face. 'I 'm easier now,' he said, and then he looked at me again. 'Your face is dark.' Then he raised his hand, and with a puzzled look he stared at it; and it dropped down to his side, and he was dead — dead with a smile on his face. And I was glad it was so easy.

Never, — and I have seen many deaths since then, — never have I seen a horror of death. It seems always, when the moment comes, a welcome thing. I never think of sending for a minister, unless it be a family of the Roman faith; then I remember that for the sake of the living the sacrament must be given. I never think of asking whether there are unrepented sins. One's life is lived, and the judgment rests in God's hands.

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THEN CHRISTS FOUGHT HARD

BY MILUTIN KRUNICH

I

Up to about four o'clock in the afternoon the people of the three towns — which clustered close together on the shores of the bay — enjoyed the fire hugely. It was Sunday, so of course everybody, young and old, came to view the novel and wondrous sight.

One of the seven immense storage tanks of the oil farm was on fire. It was a grand and at the same time an awe-inspiring spectacle. Monster black billow after billow, in quick succession, rose majestically high into the air, thrown with a tremendous yet silent force out of the gaping mouth of the giant tank. And every once in a while, between the billows, terrific tongues of flame would leap into the smoke, which glowed strangely in spite of the bright sunshine of a perfect day.

The cause of the fire was unique too. We live in the part of the world where 'it never thunders.' Still, the oil in the tank was ignited by lightning! There were people who said they had not seen lightning or heard thunder for the past ten years or more. However that may be, the fact is that at ten in the morning clouds gathered over our towns; there was a thunder storm for a few minutes, then a crash — and the tank was on fire. A few drops of rain fell. By noon the sky was as clear as ever. To the people this freak of nature was very intriguing. It was a novelty, and everybody was excited and eager: thousands came out to see the freak another freak had created.

Besides, the oil farm had a very advantageous position; there was ample room for the thousands to view the fire from every angle. The farm was situated between the old and the new towns. It was very large, and fenced in with a high fence painted green, the tanks themselves being painted in the same color. Right across its lower end was the Presidio, with its vast, bare, gently sloping hill, a veritable amphitheatre for the eager spectators; across its other end, and to its left, the new town began. Bordering the fence was the road which connected the two towns; where it ended by the upper Presidio gate the very broad street of the new town began. To the right of the farm was the government depot — a long wooden structure, filled with baled hay, grain, and so forth. From the road the farm sloped gently toward the bay. Just at the edge of it ran the railroad track. Below it stood the fine, solid, long pier of the oil company, to which, every so often, great tankers came, to take away the crude oil to its destination. To the left of the pier, and at no great distance, the row of canneries extended as far as our own town, which is practically one with the new town.

Between the main street of the new town and the canneries, and to the left of the farm, was the workmen's quarter — long, narrow, unpaved streets, bordered with sorry wooden shacks and cottages, crowded together. This

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quarter was separated from the farm by a street and a few vacant lots — there was only one cannery which stood in close proximity to the farm. The houses nearest to the farm were those which stood beside the Presidio gate.

Still, to one viewing the monstrous column of black smoke, easily a mile high, everything might have seemed dangerously near. However, up to four in the afternoon I doubt if anybody even thought about it. The holiday crowd was out for great and carefree enjoyment.

And it enjoyed itself. Neighbor talked to neighbor excitedly, remembering his or her experiences in different fires. There was not a suspicion of a panic. Even the people of the two or three nearest houses were not apprehensive. But they certainly were very busy talking to the crowds below their porches. On the large porch of one of them — the second from the Presidio gate, standing almost opposite the burning tank — the master, in shirt sleeves, his Sunday paper still scattered about him, sat in a comfortable chair, explaining things to the intensely interested hundreds below him. The good mistress, still in a white morning-apron, her fat arms still white from the flour of the Sunday pie, told to every newcomer the hundred-times-repeated (she certainly had a bit of practice!) story of how it all happened. How she 'd seen a huge ball of flame descend upon the roof of the tank and break right over it — 'like a egg, my dear; and that 's how started yonder fire.'

So people forgot their lunches and watched.

The fire departments of the three towns and the Presidio were very busy indeed. All the fire hose available was used. The road, the street, the space between the tanks, were completely covered with the long, snakelike hose. Firemen and soldiers clustered on the other tanks, wielding the heavy nozzles. They looked like small insects trying to do a thing that they did not understand in the least. There was much running and shouting everywhere. Children in numerous flocks jumped over the hose and climbed the fence, yelling in their great glee and exultation — everybody was excited and glad to be there.

But *there was no wind.* Most unusual for this part of the country — almost another freak of nature! Had there been even the slightest breeze I am sure the conflagration would have appeared in a different light to the gaping thousands. But there was not even a puff! After the electric storm the sky was absolutely clear, the air absolutely calm. The column of smoke rose very high in the air, then swerved gently toward the bay, crossed its many miles, and spread over the mountains on the opposite shore. It looked there as if half of the world were in blackness.

Yet about four in the afternoon the first breath of uneasiness swept over the multitude. By then the steel sides of the tank had caved in, reducing its height to half. The heat became intense; the crowd gave way a little. Mothers and fathers began to gather their children about them. There were no longer firemen or soldiers on the roofs of the near-by tanks, but they still crowded around, directing the water against the sides of the other tanks nearest to the fire to keep them cool.

Then the explosion. Suddenly, and utterly unexpectedly to everybody, the burning, boiling oil rose out of the tank and in dreadful, flaming waves splashed in all directions. It splashed over the road and the street. In a second, it seemed, the two nearest houses were in flames. The oil ran into the bay and burned there, spreading over the water.

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The pier was in flames; so was the government depot. Another tank blew off its roof and belched forth the black monster billows.

Then the panic. Instantly the thousands realized what the calamity really meant. The multitudes swayed and ran. Hundreds lost their reason for the moment. Here and there women fainted. Here and there women ran frantically through the surging crowds, shrieking and calling their children. Horrible rumors spread like lightning. Fifty men were burned alive between the tanks; then sixty; then eighty. Some stammered in almost inhuman fright that the three towns were surely doomed.

By evening there was not a soul who did not think about wind. Wind was the danger. Men, women, and children were on their knees, praying most fervently for the blessed calm to endure.

Everywhere in the new town a most feverish activity reigned: people were making all haste to save their belongings. Every imaginable kind of vehicle was used. The working-quarter was a bedlam, a many-tongued bedlam — foreigners lived there.

At ten at night the second tank silently boiled over. One could not believe it, but it was true that the thick column of flame rose up more than a mile. The towns were immersed in an appallingly red light like that of day. It looked as if the flame simply had to fall down and swallow the many thousands of houses.

At eleven the gasoline drums began to explode. Real explosions these, dull and powerful, each one with its bright, intense, blinding lightning. The drums, some hundreds of them, were stored in a shed on the farm. The corrugated-iron shed had gone by eleven.

Still more deadly rumor spread among the black figures that roamed the streets in that red glare. It was said that there was on the farm a fifty-thousand-gallon tank of gasoline. If that exploded! True, it was surrounded by a high, thick, concrete wall; true, between the wall and the steel of the tank were five feet of water. But what of that? The fire would come from above!

A beastly panic was at hand.

It was then that the Christs began their singular struggle.

II

Their champions were two women.

Of one I know nothing; of the other I know a great deal. In fact, she and her husband were my best friends. Were, I said; for, though the great fire took place rather recently, both of them have died since.

Mr. and Mrs. Meriweather lived in a most charming little house perched atop of a hill in the town next to the new one. It stood amid hollyhocks, nasturtiums, and geraniums, with a very trim hedge around it. There was a cosy little porch in front, half screened with ivy, and commanding a magnificent view of the bay. In a corner of the garden stood a quaint dovecote on a high pole, with several pairs of snow-white pigeons fluttering about. The place was peaceful, idyllic.

Mr. Meriweather had been a government employee for a great many years. After he had retired from the service, he chose this spot to build himself a home to live in, with his good wife, the remainder of his years. He was a very handy man, and it was with great love that he built that little home. Everything about it, or in it, had to be just so. He was immensely proud of it. How many times had he pointed out to me its marvelous and unique appointments, features, and comforts! Once or twice he even opened the closets,

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and made me pass my hand over the shelves to notice how smooth the board was! It was a modern home — electricity ruled there. Everything was done to save labor as much as possible, for the little housewife simply had to be spared. Yes, Mr. Meriweather loved his little home, but not more than his good wife loved it.

Mrs. Meriweather was a tiny little woman of seventy. Her hair was white and surprisingly abundant, and she dressed it in a most becoming way. Her small face was ivory-colored and covered with wrinkles. Yet it was a singularly beautiful face, with its large black eyes — sparkling, kindly, intelligent, almost mischievous eyes — indeed as youthful as a girl's. She was always dressed in white, from her fancy little lace cap to her shoes. She was a gay little body, all day long. Hers was a superhuman courage, hers was an indomitable character, for she had been an invalid for over thirty years; her heart was weak, very weak indeed.

Mr. Meriweather, on the other hand, was a tall, thin, gaunt, stooping six-footer. He was a little older than his wife; still his fine, silky hair was just turning gray. His face was long and bony, with a long nose and large, thick-lipped mouth, high cheek-bones, and long, deep wrinkles. It might have appeared a stern face but for the very merry twinkle in the gray eyes. He was kindness itself; and his love for Mrs. Meriweather was quite the most ideal thing I have ever seen. He was an excellent cook and knew all the intricacies of household duties quite well. He was an irreproachable nurse, which was very fortunate, for Mrs. Meriweather was forced at times to spend several weeks in bed.

They were ideally happy. Still there was a great sadness in their happiness — they never had any children.

Then, some years back, I came into their lives. They accepted me as their friend and child. This is not the place to say how much this meant to me. Suffice it only to mention that the eight or ten weeks which I spent with them every year were by far the happiest days of my life — a lonely life otherwise, since I was left an orphan very early in my boyhood.

I was, and still am, a student of biology. In this little town there was, and still is, a marine station with modern laboratories for extensive research work in science. When I came to the station for the first time, some friends recommended me to the Meriweather home for board and lodging. That is how I became acquainted with these wonderful people. And when I was away from the little town we kept in close touch with each other through letters. I want to state here that by far the finest letters I have ever read, in print or otherwise, were those written by Mrs. Meriweather. They were indeed literary gems.

III

That famous (for these three towns, at least) Sunday, we three were still in bed when the electric storm came. By mutual agreement the previous evening, since we had played '500' quite late, we had decided to take life in a most leisurely manner the next day.

I must confess that I was wakened only by the thunderclap which had ignited the oil tank. At the same time I heard Mr. Meriweather's deep basso floating from his room across the hall:—

'Bingo! It never thunders in this land! Sure, now, here's the exception to the rule. Only I would rather have the rule than the exception.'

This needed a commentary, and I supplied it; mine deserved another, and Mr. Meriweather promptly gave it out.

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So we kept it up merrily, till I happened to look through the window. It was my turn to proclaim a sensation, and I did right heartily.

'The world's on fire!' was my tremendous revelation.

We all dressed hastily and went out on the porch. We too were quite eager; we too, I am afraid, enjoyed the novel spectacle. After a hasty breakfast I sallied forth to view the fire from a nearer point of vantage.

At dinner time (two in the afternoon on Sundays) I came back and reported to the Meriweathers what was happening. After dinner Mr. Meriweather and I went to the fire. When the first tank exploded we were on the Presidio hill, near enough to be caught in the clutches of the panic.

At supper we spoke very little about it. For we did not want to excite or frighten Mrs. Meriweather too much — though I must say that at that time she felt better than at any other period since I had known her.

However, after supper, when the darkness came, Mrs. Meriweather became uneasy. We were sitting on the porch. The sky — all of it — was now covered with the smoke, which looked a horrible phantasmagoria of billowy shapes and figures, lighted by the fitful red glare, which at times attained the intensity of lightning. The air, too, was close, still, unreal. And those awful rumors reached even our peaceful abode. Several machines and trucks of the fugitives passed our little street.

Suddenly, shortly after nine o'clock, Mrs. Meriweather got up and declared calmly: —

'I want to go down; I want to be closer; I want to see.'

Needless to say, I was greatly alarmed, but Mr. Meriweather asked gently in his deep voice: —

'Do you think you can make it, Mary?'

'Why, of course I can, Abe! Like this,' she said, taking my right arm and Mr. Meriweather's left.

We went. The distance from our house to the oil farm was a little over two miles. The old family doctor had practically forbidden walking to Mrs. Meriweather, and I, knowing this, was worrying. I feared that she could not stand the exertion — a fear that later proved only too correct. But I said nothing. There was something in her manner that forbade me to speak. Mr. Meriweather understood his wife perfectly. With tender care he led her on and on, talking calmly the while about the great disaster.

Mrs. Meriweather went on slowly, steadily; she was silent, serious; she was listening and watching. Everywhere we passed groups of people, standing on the sidewalk or in the middle of the street, talking in hushed voices. One felt that a mysterious, potent, and evil fear was gripping at their souls.

The explosion of the second tank found us toward the middle of the main street in the new town. Its unspeakable dreadfulness rooted us to the spot. I confess I was frightened; nothing in my many war experiences (and I have witnessed the explosion of a huge, stone-built powder magazine at a time when thousands happened to be around) could have been compared with the silent soaring of the flames upward. This burning oil-tank explosion on a dark night was too ghastly, too horribly weird for mere human senses. Its peer, I am sure, will not spring into existence during our generation; even for our dangerously complicated modern times that would be too much.

I felt that Mrs. Meriweather trembled. But she emitted no sound. She watched, for a great many long seconds, the fiery-red tongue of flame mount higher and higher, shooting straight

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through the clouds of dense smoke. We stood there staring, aghast, blinded. Two minutes passed — and the monstrous mass of fire did not fall on the three towns. It was lost in the boundless spaces! Two more tanks were on fire. That was all.

But, *there was no wind.* Not even the slightest puff!

I thought that we were to return now. But no — Mrs. Meriweather moved slowly forward when our eyes got accustomed once more to the glare. Even the cries and shrieks of the small and large black phantoms that moved and ran about us did not daunt her.

Still I said nothing. But I did all I could to assist and support her, which, truth to tell, was superficial: she was quite vigorous, and I am sure she could have walked without any assistance whatever.

Soon we turned to the left, and two blocks farther down we turned to the right, entering one of those unpaved, dusty, dirty streets of the workmen's quarter which ran parallel with the main street.

I tell you, the horrors of fear and fright and sheer panic that we saw and heard there were simply inhuman. One felt, more than ever, that man's greatest enemy is fire, his best friend. This is true in life: that our best friends hurt us the most at times.

Finally we came to a point beyond which we could not go any farther — there was a cordon of soldiers barring the way. The spot was the crossroads of two streets, quite spacious, for on only two corners were there houses; the other two were lots, pastures for the poor people's goats. It was about six blocks away from the oil farm. The heat was oppressive and rather stifling, but not intense. It was very light there — at times one could have seen a small button in the dust.

A crowd had gathered, composed of men, women, and children of the quarter. Strange faces, in that utterly unnatural light — mostly Italian and Portuguese; here and there, Japanese and Chinese. It was a curiously quiet crowd, behaving in a most peculiar manner. Some of its members were crossing themselves; some were kneeling; and some were craning their necks to see better what was going on in front. For something was happening there — just behind the soldiers, who stood mute and motionless. A high-pitched, loud, angry voice was heard coming in gusts from behind them. Fear, that gripping, growing fear of the unknown and unexplainable, was in the air and in the hearts of the crowd.

We felt it, we three, as soon as we came near. What was happening there in front? Mrs. Meriweather wanted to see, so we pushed on. The people were kneeling. A tall, large woman stood before them. She had her face turned toward the horrid conflagration, and she held aloft, with both hands, a silver crucifix, which shone like fresh blood in the sun. And we heard her awful voice: —

'Repent, ye sinners. Repent while there is time. For the end is nigh. The last judgment is come. Ye sinners, Christ has sent the fire to destroy this wicked world! Christ is come with the flame! On your knees, ye sinners, and pray, and repent! Oh, repent, sinners, ere the time is up! For time runneth short.'

One felt the unyielding force of her powerful personality; one was conquered by her sincerity, so eloquently expressed in her voice — the voice of a true fanatic. No wonder that the poor souls behind her writhed in fear, murmuring fervent prayers to the awful deity of vengeance.

Suddenly the woman turned toward the trembling crowd and, waving her shining cross, exclaimed dramatically:

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'Aye, for time runneth short! The storm and wind will strike the earth now to scatter yonder flames. I hear the wind in the air; it bloweth shrilly. Verily it is the trumpets of the last judgment. I hear them! The wind cometh! Repent, oh, repent!'

The crowd swayed, horror-stricken. Several women wailed loudly. Yes, the motley crowd understood her — how well! The wind! That was the crux — *that* was all.

In front of them four huge tanks belched forth living flames; and above them the clouds of smoke, all red and monstrous, mocked at them with their unearthly fantasies of whirling and dancing.

Yes, here *was* a beastly panic and agony.

Mrs. Meriweather, the while, was silent, gazing at the woman. She held my arm firmly; and once or twice I felt her shake violently.

'Oh, poor lambs! This is inhuman!' I heard her whisper, after the last outcry of the woman.

Then, without a warning as to what she was about to do, she let go of my arm and, stepping carefully around the kneeling figures, went to the woman and stood beside her, looking intently into her face. Then she smiled. I saw the smile; it will remain in my memory till my dying moment. It was a smile of boundless sympathy and pity — as a loving mother would smile forgiveness to a wayward daughter. Then she faced the crowd, and in her sweet, high voice said: —

'Christ is our best friend, people. He would rather be crucified again than see His friends suffer. Why, my dears, He cries when the little finger of a little child is hurt! He loves every one of you, and He will protect you. He will, never fear. And I tell you now that the wind will not come. He will not permit it. I know, my good people.'

'The wind will not come!' she said, and the crowd understood. It surged toward her. It was almost jubilant! Hope was born then and there. Mrs. Meriweather gave it birth.

And the woman with the crucifix? She stood her ground like the very fanatics of old. She was surprised when Mrs. Meriweather came to her side and spoke comfort to the people, but in an instant she accepted the challenge. With exultant eagerness, too. The cross waved more fiercely than before, and the woman exclaimed, as soon as Mrs. Meriweather stopped speaking: —

'Do not be deceived, ye sinners. You know you are filled with sin. You know what the Bible — God's own words — says about the last judgment. Beware, I say unto you! This fire is the sign of God. He Himself sent the thunder that started yonder fire. Who dares deny that?'

'I.' Immediately Mrs. Meriweather lifted her voice. 'God is goodness and mercy. He has nothing to do with directing thunder. Thunder and lightning are Nature's, my children. Lightning strikes where it is most convenient for it to strike. And man can protect himself from it quite easily. God does not object to that. On the contrary, He wants him to; He gave him brains for it. This fire was started by man's stupidity and carelessness. That is all. Do not fear, people. Do not fear wind. It will not come. Christ will not permit it. I know.'

'Do not be deceived! I warn ye, people!' thundered the woman. 'Christ will send the wind and storm. The words of the Bible will be fulfilled to-night.'

'But it's calm; where's the wind?' Mrs. Meriweather asked, just the least bit mockingly.

'I heard it! It's coming! I hear it!' the woman exulted.

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'I don't. Do you, people? Of course not — not the slightest breeze even!' was the prompt thrust.

And so the battle began.

IV

It raged for hours, this fierce battle of the two Christs.

Mrs. Meriweather, so tiny, so frail, appeared to us during those hours like a spiritual giant; the people in the crowd felt that she was one with the spirits of goodness of the boundless spaces. Hope, without which no being could live a moment, was simply pouring out of her little person, in such torrents that even the iciest heart was warmed by it. For her courage, her faith, her hope, were perfect, infinite.

She stood erect, her hands at her sides; she never moved. But the voice! That sweet, wonder-working voice was her weapon. Even the soldiers, themselves badly frightened by the fanatic woman, began to warm up and move about, and finally they clustered around Mrs. Meriweather.

When my first daze — and I most certainly was dazed by her unexpected action — was spent, I anxiously touched Mr. Meriweather's arm.

'This will kill her,' I whispered.

He did not hear me. With his hands folded before him, the tall man stood like a statue, gazing intently at his wife. I looked closer, and saw large tears slowly sliding down his bony cheeks. I too had to swallow something that stuck in my throat many a time and in quick succession before I was able to repeat my words.

He then turned toward me, stooped a little, and smiled.

'Kill her? No. She loves a good fight!' was the shrewd statement of this wise old Yankee.

Still, a minute or two later I heard him whisper to himself, 'No; not now.'

'But we'd better help her,' he added hastily, and we moved cautiously to her side.

She looked first at her husband — so proudly! Then she lifted her wondrous eyes to me, took my hand, and whispered: —

'My good boy! Now we must win!'

And winning she was. But victory came slowly. For so many things — the real, tangible, horrible, and dreadful things of that gruesome night — were against her. The fight had to be fought till dawn. For the other woman was a tower of strength. Her sincerity was amazing; one felt that she believed absolutely every word that she uttered. And the horrors of the night — all of them — were in her favor. And she never missed one of them — she used them most skillfully and convincingly.

First came the explosions of the gasoline drums; then, at two in the morning, with an interval of only ten minutes, the third and the fourth tanks exploded. These were the most staggering blows to Mrs. Meriweather's Christ — the other Christ almost carried the field. Then, a little later, at the change of the tide, the burning oil spread over the bay, moving slowly toward the canneries. Then, shortly after three, there *was* a suspicion of wind! What agonizing moments we lived through during that fateful hour before the dawn! At that time all of the seven tanks were afire. Only, one could see that the first three were just smoking, the first one quite languidly; and the suspicion of wind died down.

So the fight went on. And the souls in the crowd swayed to and fro, now toward despair, now toward hope.

And Mrs. Meriweather stood it all. More than that: during all those hours she never showed even the faintest sign of exhaustion. At moments she was positively exultant.

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'I could sing, son!' she would whisper to me now and then.

Yet the victory came with such appalling ease! Aside from the fact that the wind did not come, the monstrous billows of smoke never even swerved. They mounted straight, like so many gigantic columns, big enough to support the whole of the universe! Mrs. Meriweather triumphed easily at the end because the woman made a fatal mistake. Just before dawn she declared that the day would never come. (Poor woman; even I could have believed it. That night — a summer night, too — was the longest in my whole existence.)

But the day did come! Oh, it was a ghastly enough morning, but it was morning just the same. And Mrs. Meriweather, like the marvelous captain she was, made the most of it — in fact, used the woman's declaration for the decisive blow. When the sun, a weird, huge red ball, shone through the smoke, she lifted her sweet voice for the last time.

'There's the good old sun, my good people. It is going to be such a beautiful day! And you see for yourselves there is no wind. Don't fear or worry any more. For the wind won't come even to-day. Now go home and rest. But remember, your best friend is and always will be your good Christ! Go home, my dears.'

And the crowd began to disperse quietly. Many, many, however, came to kiss that tiny white hand, reverently, so reverently! And the little woman let them do it.

And the other woman? I don't know what happened to her. Just after the victory two or three ugly shouts were heard, but they were speedily hushed up. I did not notice when she moved away from the crowd.

When all was over, Mrs. Meriweather suddenly sagged on our hands.

V

The little house on the hill was peaceful that morning. Outside, birds sang merrily and the pigeons cooed sweetly. Inside, in Mrs. Meriweather's room, a soft twilight still lingered. She was in her bed. She was still, her eyes closed. The little face was as pale as that of a dead person, yet there was a faint smile on it. Mr. Meriweather sat at the foot of the bed, watching, hardly breathing. I stood by the window, thinking — but those thoughts could not be expressed by mere words on a piece of paper.

At length she opened her eyes and looked at us, smiling as no mother ever smiled on her beloved ones. Then she turned her head toward the window and watched the hollyhocks. But they were absolutely still in their colored glory. After a while she said, with boundless sweetness: —

'Did n't He fight nobly! And He 's still fighting!'

She never got up from that bed.

The damage of the conflagration ran into millions. But what of that? It is forgotten now, completely. The little woman, I am positive, will live for many a day to come in the hearts of those to whom she gave hope at the moment when hope was dead. Yes, she will live there — and her Christ will live there, too.

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A CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGE

BY VIVIAN T. POMEROY

THERE rose from the dimness the fairest face to haunt me. It rose from a neglected corner of the library of the house near Boston where I was a guest. It was a miniature by the famous Malbone — a portrait of a girl with fair hair piled a shade carelessly on a proud little head. From long ago came the beauty of that face, the gayety and wistfulness of the deep eyes. I looked at the portrait more than a hundred years old. I saw the mocking, charming, lovely mouth — laughing, it seemed, at the demure muslin folded over the long and graceful neck and at the ridiculous little sleeves. I saw the high, serene brow which the careless hair tried to hide. And I said: 'Eliza Southgate of Scarboro, Maine, — you lovely creature born in 1783, — what do you say about these modern girls? You went to school in Medford; you went to school in Boston; you knew Boston well. Won't you tell me whether this present age is so terribly different? Whether you or we are to be counted happier?' The laughing eyes seemed friendly; but the serene brow baffled me.

Then I went to my case and found the picture of a girl of 1925. Not a painstaking miniature. A photograph. And I looked at her. She too was lovely. Her eyes slightly puzzled, but fearless. Her hair fell cropped in a rather hard line against her thin, pointed face. She is a little over twenty now. Very gay and oddly serious. A frank mixture. She is gifted and brilliant and undeniably beautiful and, as it happens, English. She has recently been working among some derelict people in Europe. I myself am a little too old to understand exactly what she does. It is something to do with fighting ugliness and stupidity and dirt and wrong ideas. She is doing things Eliza Southgate could never have glimpsed in a dream. So I said: 'Peggy, — dear child, so much more clever than I am, — what would you say to Eliza about life? About the fun and loneliness, the splendor and muddle of this age?' And as I looked at her grave and hopeful eyes it seemed as if she answered: 'Judge for yourself. You have those letters of mine. You have hers. Why should I tell you anything?' So I read the letters the same day.

Eliza Southgate, having gone to school at Medford, aged fourteen, writes to her parents: —

May 12, 1797

HONORED PARENTS,

With pleasure I sit down to the best of parents to inform them of my situation, as doubtless they are anxious to hear. Permit me to inform them something of my foolish heart. When first I came here I gave myself up to reflection, but not pleasing reflections. I burst into tears, and instead of trying to calm my feelings I tried to feel worse. I begin to feel happier and will soon gather up all my philosophy and think of the duty that now attends me, to think that here I may drink freely of the fountain of knowledge. But I will

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not dwell any longer on this subject. I hope I am in some measure sensible of the great obligation I am under to you for the inexpressible kindness and attention which I have received of you from the cradle to my present situation in school. In my infancy you nursed and reared me up, my inclinations you have indulged and checked my follies, have liberally fed me with the bounty of your table, and from your instructive lips I have been admonished to virtue, morality, and religion.

My thankful heart with grateful feelings beats,
With filial duty I my parents greet.
I wish and trust to glad declining years
May each heart go, each eye refrain from tears.
When days are finished and when time shall cease,
May you be wafted to eternal peace

is the sincere wish of your dutiful daughter,

ELIZA SOUTHGATE

Robert Southgate, Esq., and Lady

On February 13, 1798, Eliza, aged fifteen, writes from school in Boston, where she has been sent by her parents to be 'finished': —

'HONORED FATHER: I am again placed at school under the tuition of an amiable lady, so mild, so good, no one can help loving her. She treats all her scholars with such tenderness as would win the affection of the most savage brute, tho' scarcely able to receive an impression of the kind. I learn embroidery and geography at present, and wish your permission to learn musick. You may justly say, my best of fathers, that every letter of mine is one asking for something more, never contented. If you refuse me, I know you do what you think best, and I am sure I ought not to complain, for you have never yet refused me anything that I have asked. My best of parents, how shall I repay you? You answer, "By your good behaviour." Heaven grant that it may be such as may repay you.'

Eliza, aged seventeen, still in Boston, writes on February 7, 1800: —

'Now, mamma, what do you think I am going to ask for? A wig. Eleanor Coffin has got a new one just like my hair, and only 5 dollars. I must either cut my hair or have one. I cannot dress it at all stylish. At the assembly I was quite ashamed of my head, for nobody has long hair. If you will consent to my having one, do send me over a 5 dollar bill by the post immediately after you receive this, for I am in hopes to have it for the next assembly.'

Eliza, still seventeen, shows a critical spirit toward the older generation. In a letter from Bath to her sister she writes: —

'After a fortnight very pleasantly spent in Wiscasset I return to Bath. In my last I mentioned that Judge Lowell's family were expected in Wiscasset; they came immediately after. Judge Lowell appears to be one of the mildest, most amiable men I ever saw. Mrs. Lowell is a fine ladylike woman, yet her manners are such as would have been admired 50 years ago; there is too much appearance of whalebone and buckram to please the depraved taste of the present age.'

At the age of nineteen, Eliza Southgate writes a long epistle to her cousin, Moses Porter: —

'I have often thought what profession I would choose were I a man. I have often thought, if I felt conscious of possessing brilliant talents, the law would be my choice. Then I might hope to arrive at an eminence which would be gratifying to my feelings. I should then hope to be a public character, respected and admired. But unless I was convinced I possessed the talents which would distinguish me as a speaker, I would be anything rather than a lawyer, — from the dry sameness

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of such employments as the business of an office all my feelings would revolt, — but to be an eloquent speaker would be the delight of my heart. I thank Heaven I was born a woman. I have now only patiently to wait until some clever fellow shall take a fancy to me and place me in a situation. We ladies, you know, possess that "sweet pliability of temper" that disposes us to enjoy any situation, and we must have no choice in these things till we find what is to be our destiny; then we must consider it the best in the world. But remember, I desire to be thankful I am not a man. I should not be content with moderate abilities — nay, I should not be content with mediocrity in anything; but as a woman I am equal to the generality of my sex, and I do not feel that great desire of fame I think I should feel if I were a man.'

In September of the same year Eliza writes a letter which bears the interpretation that she is in love: —

'I know not, my dearest mother, how to introduce this subject, yet as I fear you may hear it from others I consider it a duty to tell you all. At Albany, on our way to Ballston, we put up at the same house with a Mr. Bowne from New York, and from that time he was particularly attentive to me. I felt cautious of encouraging his attentions, though I did not wish to discourage them. I felt myself in a situation truly embarrassing. His conduct was such as I shall ever reflect on with the greatest pleasure. And now, my dearest mother, I submit myself wholly to the wishes of my father and you. That I feel deeply interested in Mr. Bowne I candidly acknowledge, and I have every reason to think he has well weighed his sentiments toward me. I have referred him wholly to you, and you, my dearest parents, must decide.'

The following year Eliza is married. She describes an introduction during her honeymoon: —

'We always kept by ourselves, but in passing the entry General Knox, who had just come in the stage, met Mr. B. and asked where he was from. He told him from the Eastward. Alone? No. Who is with you? Mrs. Bowne. So plump a question he could not evade, so the General insisted on being introduced to the bride. I was walking the room and reading, perfectly unsuspicious, when the opening of the door and Mr. Bowne's voice, "General Knox, my love," quite roused me. He came up, took my hand very gracefully, prest it to his lips, and begged leave to congratulate me on the event that had lately taken place. After a few minutes' conversation, "And pray, sir," said he, turning to Mr. Bowne, "when did this happy event take place?" I felt my face glow, but Mr. Bowne, always delicate and collected, said: "'T is not a fortnight since, sir." . . . General Knox introduced me to General Pinckney from Carolina. General Pinckney, they say, is to be our next President. "Mr. Bowne," said General Knox to General Pinckney, "has done us the honour to come to the District of Maine for a bud to transplant in New York."'

From Peggy. A letter undated, but internal evidence proves it to be written in April 1916: —

'Dear Father and Mother: As soon as the train started I felt awful. So I ate my sandwiches at once. The old lady opposite was quite decent, and she offered me her magazine and some butterscotch, so I felt better. There were five other girls on the train. Two of them are jolly. When I think of the dogs, I get awfully homesick. The school is beastly. Whatever did you send me here for? I hate it. Peggy.'

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From Peggy, May 1916: —

'DEAREST MOTHER: Thanks for the money. I am getting on all right. I have decided that I want to be an actress as soon as I leave school. I am going to be in a play here next term. We have a good many arguments about religion. I think there is a good deal to be said against a God. There is cruelty to animals, which why does God let? I hope father won't mind if I say I am now an atheist.'

From Peggy, 1922: —

'DARLINGS BOTH: I think you are wrong about my being too young to decide about my life. One is much older now at nineteen than you were, I think. I dare say I am talking nonsense to some extent; but the main body of my feeling is sound and sincere. Of course, I may fall in love; but I have several times already. It is a rather disappointing experience. There is so much clumsiness, so little beauty and light, or so it seems to me. I know there is a good deal of sentimental rubbish talked about careers and callings; but one has the feeling that one has to challenge this awful world so stupefied by the war. One has to see to it that the world is cleared for the real business of living and doing fine things all together. I want to fight my own battles, and to know that I am fighting for a new world. I suppose life is a series of battles. First I hated school; then I conquered and adored it. Once I detested the Church and hated God. I see now that I was only fighting my way through to understanding what God means for me. And now I think it must be God, as He seems to me, that urges me to be myself at this stage; not to care much what people say, but to follow this inner urge which is taking me toward championing a cause.

'Of course, darlings, you hate me to be odd and different; but I am sure you would be ashamed of me if I danced round looking pretty and waiting for marriage, or sprawled about looking for it. I shall fly into it if it comes. Of course I shall. But I shall see to it that it's got the real shine on it, if I do, and that it is n't just sham. Meanwhile I want something I have n't had so far. You've given me a wonderfully good time; and now I want hardness, mental fight, some sort of discipline. I want to challenge every old fallacy, every ancient prejudice, and all the new ones too, and win the way for beauty and creativeness. We want new art, new poetry, new vision, as well as new politics, don't we? Well, I've simply got to take my share in winning it. I love you more than ever. I could cry like a little fool for thinking of you at this moment; but I must go my own right way, and you will let me, I know, and your love will follow me all the way.'

'Judge for yourself,' she had said to me. An uneasy recollection of other words of Peggy's stole across my mind — words about a contemporary of mine. 'He's about my age,' I had said, and was about to add: 'Forty. Quite young.' I did not add it, for Peggy had interrupted carelessly: 'Oh! Not young, then.' So who am I, who are we, the 'not young,' to judge? And it seemed, as I sat with portraits and letters, that there was no question of yesterday or to-day, but eternally challenging youth, pilgrims in every age, asking everything of life, venturing, defying, risking. Only to-day, perhaps as never before, in Bojer's great words, youth 'sowing corn in the enemy's field that God may exist.'

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NEIGHBORS OF MINE

BY NORA WALN

I

We fox-trotted and one-stepped away the hours from ten until two in the morning to the animated syncopation of the Nanking Community Club Jazz Orchestra. Then I read an affirmative answer in my husband's eyes to the question I sent him over my partner's shoulder. A few seconds later, having donned practical shoes and covered my dress with an all-enveloping coat, I slipped out of the back door to find him sauntering leisurely along the path with the forbearing manner men have of rubbing in the fact that it takes wives longer to make themselves presentable than it does husbands.

A word from our chauffeur to an armed sentinel and we turned into the Big Horse Road to glide five miles over smooth asphalt cleared of traffic and guarded at intervals of twenty yards by a double row of soldiers with drawn bayonets. Such is the custom in this country of civil wars when government officials go abroad. Tight in my hand I held the precious red card of invitation to attend service at the Confucian temple, from the gentle little old civil governor who — such is fate — was in control of affairs in Kiangsi Province fourteen years ago when my husband held a post there, and was returned to office again just a year before we came.

After the first mile our motor fell into line behind the cars of the civil and military governors and their many attendants. We rode past shuttered shops and closed compounds — without even a stray dog to remind one of the beehive this road is ordinarily — to the gates of the temple where the Government comes to pay homage to the greatness of Confucius each year before dawn on his birthday.

Within the great red gates the civil and military governors, each with one hundred attendants, took their places on red-silk cushions laid to the right and left sides of the lowest level of the oblong courtyard, which is composed of three flagged squares with double steps of carved marble leading from one to the other and finally to the temple building wherein stands the tablet to Confucius.

On the level square nearest the sacred room were hung a myriad of colored lanterns in different shapes. Here also were two great wire baskets on high standards, heaped with knots of wood.

Massed in the centre of the square were sixty kinds of ancient musical instruments — bells small as buttercups, bells of silver, bells of porcelain, and one great bell of metal the same width as the maker's height; tiny drums and one great drum of dull red, the size of a hogshead; curious hollowed logs of highly polished old wood with one side open and set with strings of catgut. To the left of the musical instruments were sixty boys wearing long blue-cotton coats and mortar-

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board hats; on the right stood a withered old man, crier of the temple, famous beyond the province for the musical resonance of his voice.

Silence lay like a benediction over the temple grounds. We had all found our places. Then a voice from the lower level chanted the request for permission to pay homage to the Sage. The voice of the crier repeated the request. The drums broke into a thunderous roar that died through the bells, the stringed instruments, and the high soprano of the choir boys, who held the note long after the other music had ceased.

Three times this was repeated. Then the crier sang out the answer bidding the supplicants come.

A match was set to the baskets of wood, and flame darted skyward. The aged man with the gentle face slowly climbed three long flights of stairs, supported by officials and preceded by bearers of flaming torches of braided bamboo, to perform the first ritual of worship — the sacrifice of an ox before the tablet altar.

The civil governor, attended by his officials in the long embroidered robes of the Sung dynasty, returned to his cushion on the lowest level. Again he took up the cry, which was repeated as before through crier, drums, bells, stringed instruments, and choir boys, and answered by the crier. Five times in all he came up the long stairs and to the altar table, performing the intricate ritual, ending with the sipping of a cup of tea, which has been invented by man since the death of the Sage.

The military governor, who is of Western education, remained on the lowest level throughout the service. At intervals I found myself wondering what thoughts stirred under his blue plumed hat.

When the last rite had been performed we stood with bowed heads for several moments of silence. Then silvery music played on the air, and the crier led the choir boys in a soft soprano chant in which they beat time with sixty-one long feathers from the golden pheasant.

One by one the lanterns were extinguished. The servants who had helped in any way in work about the temple went forward to receive the white slips of paper that entitled each to a share of the sacrificial meat on presentation to the temple butcher before noon. The civil governor, pale from two hours of worship, came and spoke to us and took my husband to the room where refreshments of tea and cake were laid. I, being only a woman and thus not served with men, according to custom, was free to wander about the temple, where dawn was breaking.

These are some of the teachings of the Sage which I read on the tablets of red with gold-inlaid characters: —

Better do a kindness near at home than walk a thousand miles to burn incense.

A man of noble mind seeks to perfect the good in others and not their evil.

The inferior man always embellishes his mistakes.

If on self-examination I find I am not upright, shall I not be in fear even of a beggar? If I examine myself and find that I am upright, I will go forward unafraid against thousands and tens of thousands.

To see the right and not do it is cowardice.

Sincerity is the way of God; study it wisely, inquire into it searchingly, reflect upon it carefully, discriminate about it accurately, and practise it wisely.

When Fan Che asked Confucius, 'What is humanity?' the master answered, 'To love men.' When he asked, 'What is knowledge?' the answer was, 'To know men.'

He who desires to know men must first know God.

Why should God speak in words? The four seasons follow in their course and all things come to life.

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II

'Remember well the tasks of the household — your father's thin rice gruel, which he likes steaming hot at seven in the morning. Watch Faithful Duck — she is lazy and may slight the pounding of the linen to snowy whiteness in the stream every third day. Be careful that the small children do not wander beyond the Dragon Screen. In the second drawer of the chest in my room there are fresh candles to burn before the Fox Spirit Altar.' Mrs. Lui Pin Fan gave last directions to her daughter from her sedan chair after she had been lifted to the shoulders of the four bearers. 'Also be thoughtful of the comfort of our Western guest.'

'Yes, yes, sweet mother. I shall earnestly do as thou hast taught me. Let thy heart rest, and enjoy thy visit with my maternal grandparents,' was Hsing-o's answer.

'Come, my wife, we must start.' Mr. Lui leaned from his chair.

'*I lu ping on!* (A road of peace!)' chorused children and servants as the two chairs were borne away to the train that Mrs. Lui was to take from the junction three miles distant.

Hsing-o had been my instructress in the arts of her language, Mandarin, for several years, and now that my husband was absent on business at the same time that her mother was to make her annual visit to the house of her parents I had been invited to spend the time in the Lui Pin Fan dwelling.

At mention of a Fox Spirit Altar a dozen questions burned on my tongue. A little time before, I had received from a friend in England an exquisitely written book entitled *Lady into Fox*, but the mention of candles for the Fox Spirit Altar was the first intimation I had of any relations between fox spirits and Chinese households. Only by holding my mouth close shut did I resist impertinent probing into something sacred to the family of which I was a guest.

Five days of my visit passed. Shyly the children became my friends and vied with each other in keeping in the air the small red balls I had brought, by skillfully kicking them alternately with heel and toe. The servants tested the material in my garments and tried on my hats. Faithful Duck asked my age, and offered to show me how to make myself beautiful by dyeing my hair and treating it with slippery-elm juice to make it lie back smooth and dark. The wives of Hsing-o's paternal uncle questioned me about my home and awkwardly attempted to use the knives and forks for which I sent to amuse them. The women spent hours in open wonderment that I should say I was not lonely in the dwelling where I was the only wife.

I learned nothing of the Fox Spirit Tablet Altar until the morning of the sixth day, when Hsing-o said simply, 'Would you like to come with me to light fresh candles before the Fox Spirit Altar?'

I saw a reassuring smile pass from Mr. Lui to Hsing-o as we left the Well of Heaven Courtyard, where we had all been reading.

'This is the Fu Sin Sut (Fox Spirit House),' Hsing-o said, pushing open the door of a room off the Jade Fountain Courtyard. 'My father saw that you were interested when mother spoke of the candles, but I waited until we knew you better to bring you here.'

The room was immaculately clean and bare of ornament, save a simple tablet above a tablet altar. On the table were arranged dishes of fruit, eggs, and two bouquets of flowers. Hsing-o cleared away the old wax and placed fresh candles in the holders.

'We keep incense burning here on ordinary days — candles are only for

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special festivals. To-day is the Festival of Awakening Insects.'

'Do many families have tablets to the Fox Spirit?'

'All the homes I know except one — the household of our maternal great-uncle, Wu. He is a stubborn man and has new ideas — he does not hold with superstitions, as he says. He has had a lot of trouble, though — one son an imbecile, one dead in a storm at sea, and three wives who are barren.'

'Do you think that he would have been saved these afflictions if he had paid homage to the Fox Spirit?'

'I do not know.' Hsing-o looked at me coldly. 'I only know that we in our family believe that the Fox Spirit often troubles householders — sometimes inhabiting the body of a woman so that she cannot bear children, sometimes causing young children to run away into the wilderness, sometimes doing little mischiefs like turning milk sour. We burn candles and give fruit and eggs, that our house may continue in peace.'

Hsing-o is my instructress in Mandarin. I am her guest. In the bitter school of lost friendships I have long since learned to be silent unless my opinion is requested.

III

At the Feast of the Formation of Heaven and Earth the four wives of Wong Hsu honored me with an invitation to accompany them to worship at the Temple of Illuminous Light. As arranged, I met them at the place where the 'Street of the Convenient Bridge for Mothèr' turns into the country highway. Their eyes shone with excitement as they greeted me — the rarity of their excursions beyond the walls of their home makes of each trip an adventure.

I caught the gleam of the gold pin crossing the knot of Mai-ling's hair; she is the third wife and to her belongs the honor of having borne the family seven sons. Then my bearers fell into the fifth place in the procession — just back of the wives and in front of the four amahs who accompanied them.

We swung along at a smart pace over the flagged road, which tradition says was laid fifteen hundred years ago, between neatly squared-off paddy-fields where the plants were in different stages of growth. Some were bent low with ripe harvest; others showed but an emerald-green mist above brown mud. In several inundated plots men followed, knee-deep in oozy slime, behind buffalo-drawn ploughs. Huge water-buffaloes pastured on the borders of grass around the paddy-fields. A brown-skinned boy lay on the back of one of these beasts, steering the herd away from spots not intended for their grazing. Two rosy-cheeked country girls worked a treadmill, with broad bare feet, drawing water from the canal. Fluffy white clouds floated in the sky. At the entrance to the temple a pair of neat black-and-white magpies were noisily coaxing their young to venture from a nest on the pink wall.

We entered the temple gates under the huge abacus, with the warning, 'As ye live, so shall it be counted,' in gilt characters above it. We went, without tarrying, past the stalls wherein are depicted in statues sinners receiving punishment in eighteen hells of the lower world. The wives of Hsu lead careful, virtuous lives, and have no concern with these hells.

We went directly to the building containing the image to Wen-ch'ang (God of Literature). The eldest son of the household — born of the third wife — is a student in a university in far America. The four women prayed in turn for his success. True love shone in their faces as they united in hope for

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him. They went through the ritual of three times knocking the head on the prayer bench and repeating a formal prayer mechanically from custom, but each one spoke of the young man, whom I have never seen, as she came back to a place near me.

We went next to the Goddess of Mercy, where the youngest wife, who awaits the birth of a child, left a little shoe at the foot of the altar. The wives prayed, each in turn, that it would be a girl.

'We have been blessed with many sons,' the second wife explained. 'And when they are with us a few years they go into the world of men. We do so want a baby girl — a girl is sweet, don't you think?'

At the altars of the Gods of Wealth and of War they burned incense, that prosperity might continue in their household and peace come to the land.

The amahs prayed always after their mistresses, but went first through the courtyards, pressing a passage through the crowded places; for a busy mart of trade had sprung up to catch the eye of worshipers. Temporary booths with innumerable fancies: brown pots of spiced ginger, blue bowls of salted watermelon-seeds, ready-cut silk coats, strips of bright embroidery, artificial flowers for the hair, snuff bottles with designs painted inside, gilt images of the gods, pink imitation-porcelain washbasins, balloons for children, alarm clocks, chow dogs, little tables at which to sit and sip tea, a Punch and Judy and a peep show, a weather-beaten old man telling fortunes. Above the babble of voices rang the whine of beggars. One tugged at my garment: 'Peace be with you, old grandmother — and could you spare a coin?'

We dropped coppers in her dirty hand and hastened to our waiting chairs.

'I like the temple best on ordinary days when there is no noisy market,' the second wife said, as we rested in the cool of the Well of Heaven Courtyard, in the women's quarters of her home.

'In life there must be room for all,' the first wife chided gently.

'I prefer the activity of feast days,' put in the fourth wife, her eyes sparkling with excitement. 'It is nice to have a change from the ordinary quiet of our daily life.'

IV

As twilight fell on the fifteenth of the Chrysanthemum Moon, which three years ago coincided with the second of September according to the Western calendar, we drifted down the Yangtze on a Chinese junk. Our skipper played the boat's single sail so as to keep us to a course just off the right of midstream, safe from collision with swift-moving modern steam-craft. The orb of the sun had disappeared below the horizon, but the lingering rays of light touched widespread sails of skiffs like ours, making them wings of pure gold, warmed the nearer hills with rose, turned distant ranges to violet, and made deep pools of purple of the evergreen groves that surround the ancient temples on the naked mountain-sides.

Thus we journeyed through a super-world where the kindly light of departing day enfolded hill, plain, and river in a caress of beauty that veiled all the pain of poverty, the filth of unsanitation, and the selfishness of man's struggle for survival.

With the coming of night, lanterns glimmered from country hamlets. We were nearing a village when we first saw dozens of lotus blossoms, each with a burning candle in its golden heart, floating serenely on the water's surface.

'The candles will burn the flowers,

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won't they, amah?' my little daughter asked.

'The flowers are made of wax, like the candles — use your eyes, Small One. You know that real lotus blossoms are not red, heliotrope, orange, pale blue, and green like these. To-day is the Festival for Friendless Children. According to the religion of my people, it is the time of special prayers for babies who have no parents or for little ones who are not treated kindly by those to whom God has entrusted them. It is the custom on the eve of this festival to light candles in the hearts of flowers of wax and set them afloat as a covenant that we will be good to all children.'

'I should like to light one, amah. Perhaps it would help me to remember to be kind and to share my sweets with Roselynd — even though she makes me angry by always choosing my own favorite chocolate peppermint. She is only three and she has n't any Mummy.'

Amah — always reserved, when I am present, in sharing her beliefs with my child — moved her hands nervously as she put the flame to the candle that the skipper's wife brought her. I felt her searching eyes upon me, but I continued to gaze into the distance; and a few seconds later two blossoms with flaming hearts — symbolizing the promise of my old nurse and my child to be kind always to little children — drifted downstream.

Long after amah and my daughter had gone to bed, I watched candle-lit lotus blossoms float out in dozens from wayside towns, and sometimes singly from lone mud-dwellings.

V

Sung Fan Che had journeyed to the mountain of Kui-hwa-shan, in the province of Nganhwei, to the Monastery of Morning Dew, — a journey consuming six weeks, just at the height of the tea harvest when he was most needed at home, — to secure for his grandmother a garment bearing the seal of Ti-tsang-wang (God of the Underworld), to ensure her soul safe passage through the Land of Shades. This gossip was carried to me by little Martha Chun, the six-year-old daughter of a Chinese woman who was my classmate at Swarthmore.

A few days later I received an oblong red envelope containing a red card with characters brushed in gilt, bidding me to have tea with Mrs. Sung on Fifth day at four o'clock. Mrs. Sung's acquaintances, friends, and family always look upon an invitation from her as a summons from a ruling empress, to be accepted regardless of any previous engagement, and demanding one's very best attire. I treasure every audience I ever had with her, and I have always felt that my favor in her sight hung on a very slim thread.

I had heard that she was dying. She sat propped erect among embroidered cushions on the same bed where in her youth she had given birth to nine sons and five daughters. From the Courtyard of Peonies outside her room came the voices of her two great-great-great-grandchildren at play. In her face and on her slender hands, beneath the rich satin cuffs of her coat, was chiseled the story of ninety-three years of vigorous life. Worn as she was from the ravages of fever, her voice vibrated with force as she bade me sit where she could see me as we talked. I began to discredit the statement of the doctors that her recovery was impossible.

'Shang-ti's summons has come for me,' she said simply, and then she abruptly turned the conversation into channels of local gossip.

For an hour, perhaps, we sipped tea, ate the kernels of watermelon seeds, and

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talked small nothings. Then her great-granddaughter, a woman of thirty who had come from her home in Peking to be with Mrs. Sung, entered the room, bearing in her hand a Christian Bible in Chinese characters.

'Grandmother, won't you listen to the Eternal Truth before it is too late? You are a good woman, but you break my heart by continuing to cling to heathen ways. Won't you let me read to you?' she pleaded brokenly.

'All faiths are one to the Giver of Life,' the old woman replied, smiling gently upon her great-granddaughter. 'Read to me, since it will give you comfort, but do not be troubled. When you have lived as long as I have, and have seen this world and the one beyond bridged as often as I have by what we call life and death, you will cease to weary yourself with many questions — you will only trust. I shall pass the happier, wrapped in the cloak that your father brought me, because it is the faith of my age to wear it.'

At dawn this morning she pushed open the gates of eternity, her earthly body wrapped in the garment bearing the seal of Ti-tsang-wang, which had been secured for her from the Monastery of Morning Dew.

I come of a line of Plain Friends, and I grew to young-womanhood in Pennsylvania, never having attended worship other than that of the Quaker meetinghouse. I married an Englishman bred to the ritual of the High Church. My husband is in government service in China, and of necessity I have had to find my friends among these my neighbors of whom I have written. I have no bond with these women save the bond of proximity — and the kinship which women have in their need of companionship with each other. Naturally my friendships are with women who are wives, mothers, homemakers; and I can truthfully say that I have come to the place where I feel no racial difference. I am puzzled at what I consider their queer ways; they, in turn, often find me odd.

As the years pass I find myself filled more and more with the certainty that the Divine Father draws men and women toward Him as naturally as the flowers are drawn toward the sun. The complications of many varied rituals no longer trouble me.

This evening, as I write, a river woman is making her evening prayer before the miniature altar on her sampan, anchored in the Pearl River, two hundred feet from my verandah. I know that she prays for the safe return of her husband, who has gone into the interior on business, because I talked with her half an hour ago — just such a prayer as I often make, except that the outer observances of her religion are different from mine.

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A STAR AMONG THE REEDS

I

Out of the dusk the Wanderers drew near,
  Planets that burned above the dim parade,
Above the white road mystically clear
  Through moveless isles of shade.
He trod the dust on which the stars came down
  Immortal with the radiance of the world,
  And watched the little meteors hurled
Into the dark. 'So drown
  Thoughts that would speak the wonder of the soul,'
He cried, 'when glory far exceeds the sight.
  This is the presence chamber of the Whole,
    And here the stars immerse
The panting heart in everlasting light.
    This is the universe.'

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II

What prescience in the realms of dusk draws back
The Wanderers to their homeless depths of sky?
It is the dawn; through the long leafy track
Her young wings winnow by.
Fringed in the reedy shallows of a pond
He sees the last star swimming white and cold
Where measureless deeps of cloud unfold
Beneath a trembling frond.
'Does not Illusion give to cloud and crag
The depths that make still waters yet more deep?
The farthest star beneath the iris flag
Swims where the ripples purse
The pool's cold lips,' he cried, 'as if in sleep.
This is the universe.'

THEODORE MORRISON

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IN QUEST OF THE PERFECT BOOK

BY WILLIAM DANA ORCUTT

I

'HERE is a fine volume,' a friend remarked, handing me a copy of *The Ideal Book*, written and printed by Cobden-Sanderson at the Doves Press.

'It is,' I assented readily, turning the leaves and enjoying the composite beauty of the careful typography and the perfect impression upon the soft, handmade paper with the satisfaction one always feels when face to face with a work of art. 'Have you read it?'

'Why — no,' he answered. 'I picked it up in London, and they told me it was a rare volume. You don't necessarily read rare books, do you?'

My friend is a cultivated man, and his attitude toward his latest acquisition irritated me; yet after thirty years of similar disappointments I should not have been surprised. How few, even among those interested in books, recognize the fine, artistic touches that constitute the difference between the commonplace and the distinguished! The volume under discussion was written by a foremost authority upon the art of bookmaking; its producer was one of the few great master-printers in the history of the world; yet the only significance it possessed to its owner was the fact that someone in whom he had confidence had told him it was rare! Being rare, he coveted the treasure, and acquired it with no greater understanding than if it had been a piece of Chinese jade.

'What makes you think this is a fine book?' I inquired, deliberately changing the approach.

He laughed consciously. 'It cost me nine guineas — and I like the looks of it.'

Restraint was required not to say something that might affect our friendship unpleasantly, and friendship is a precious thing.

'Do something for me,' I asked quietly. 'That is a short book. Read it through, even though it is rare, and then let us continue this conversation we have just begun.'

A few days later he invited me to dine with him at his club. 'I asked you here,' he said, 'because I don't want anyone, even my family, to hear what I am going to admit to you. I have read that book, and I'd rather not know what you thought of my consummate ignorance of what really enters into the building of a well-made volume — the choice of type, the use of decoration, the arrangement of margins. Why, bookmaking is an art! Perhaps I should have known that, but I never stopped to think about it.'

One does have to stop and think about a well-made book in order to comprehend the difference between printing that is merely printing and that which is based upon art in its broadest sense and upon centuries of precedent. It does require more than a gleam of intelligence to grasp the idea that the basis of every volume ought to be the thought expressed by the writer;

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that the type, the illustrations, the decorations, the paper, the binding, simply combine to form the vehicle to convey that expression to the reader. When, however, this fact is once absorbed, one cannot fail to understand that if these various parts, which compositely comprise the whole, fail to harmonize with the subject and with each other, then the vehicle does not perform its full and proper function.

I wondered afterward if I had not been a bit too superior in my attitude toward my friend. As a matter of fact, printing as an art has come into its own only within the last quarter-century. Looking back to 1891, when I began to serve my apprenticeship under John Wilson at the old University Press in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the broadness of the profession that I was adopting as my life's work had not as yet unfolded its unlimited possibilities. At that time the three great American printers were John Wilson, Theodore L. De Vinne, and Henry O. Houghton. The volumes produced under their supervision were perfect examples of the best bookmaking of the period, yet no one of these three men considered printing as an art. It was William Morris who in modern times first joined these two words together with the publication of his magnificent Kelmscott volumes. Such type, such decorations, such presswork, such sheer composite beauty!

This was in 1895. Morris, in one leap, became the most famous printer in the world. Everyone tried to produce similar volumes, and the resulting productions, made without appreciating the significance of decoration combined with type, were about as bad as they could be. I doubt if, at the present moment, there exists a single one of these sham Kelmscotts made in America that the printer or the publisher cares to have recalled to him.

When the first flare of Morris's popularity passed away, and his volumes were judged on the basis of real bookmaking, they were classified as marvelously beautiful *objets d'art* rather than books — composites of Burne-Jones, the designer, and William Morris, the decorator-printer, co-workers in sister arts; but from the very beginning Morris's innovations showed the world for the first time that printing belonged among the fine arts. The Kelmscott books awoke in me an overwhelming desire to put myself into the volumes I produced. I realized that no man can give of himself beyond what he possesses, and that to make my ambition worth accomplishing I must absorb and make a part of myself the beauty of the ancient manuscripts and the early printed books. This led me to take up an exhaustive study of the history of printing.

Until then Gutenberg's name, in my mind, had been preëminent. As I proceeded, however, I came to know that he was not really the 'inventor' of printing, as I had always thought him to be; that he was the one who first foresaw the wonderful power of movable types as a material expression of man, rather than the creator of anything previously unknown. I discovered that the Greeks and the Romans had printed from stamps centuries earlier, and that the Chinese and the Koreans had cut individual characters in metal.

I well remember the thrill I experienced when I first realized — and at the time thought my discovery was original! — that, had the Chinese or the Saracens possessed Gutenberg's wit to join these letters together into words, the art of printing must have found its way to Constantinople, which would have thus become the centre of culture and learning of the fifteenth century.

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II

From this point on, my quest seemed a part of an Arabian Nights tale. Cautiously opening a door, I would find myself in a room containing treasures of absorbing interest. From this room there were doors leading in different directions into other rooms even more richly filled; and thus onward, with seemingly no end, to the fascinating rewards that came through effort and perseverance.

Germany, although it had produced Gutenberg, was not sufficiently developed as a nation to make his work complete. The open door led me away from Germany into Italy, where literary zeal was at its height. The life and customs of the Italian people of the fifteenth century were spread out before me. In my imagination I could see the velvet-gowned agents of the wealthy patrons of the arts searching out old manuscripts and giving commissions to the scribes to prepare hand-lettered copies for their masters' libraries. I could mingle with the masses and discover how eager they were to learn the truth in the matter of religion, and the cause and the remedies of moral and material evils by which they felt themselves oppressed. I could share with them their expectant enthusiasm and confidence that the advent of the printing press would afford opportunity to study description and argument where previously they had merely gazed at pictorial design. I could sense the desire of the people for books, not to place in cabinets, but to read in order to know; and I could understand why workmen who had served apprenticeships in Germany so quickly sought out Italy, the country where princes would naturally become patrons of the new art, where manuscripts were ready for copy, and where a public existed eager to purchase their products.

While striving to realize the significance of the conflicting elements I felt around me, I found much of interest in watching the scribes fulfilling their commissions to prepare copies of original manuscripts, becoming familiar for the first time with the primitive methods of book manufacture and distribution. A monastery possessed an original manuscript of value. In its scriptorium or reading-office one might find perhaps twenty or thirty monks seated at desks, each with a sheet of parchment spread out before him, upon which he inscribed the words that came to him in the droning, singsong voice of the reader selected for the duty because of his familiarity with the subject-matter of the volume. The number of desks the scriptorium could accommodate determined the size of this early 'edition.' When these copies were completed, exchanges were made with other monasteries that possessed other original manuscripts of which copies had been made in a similar manner. I was even more interested in the work of the secular scribes, usually executed at their homes, for it was to these men that the commissions were given for the beautiful humanistic volumes. As they had taken up the art of hand-lettering from choice or natural aptitude instead of as a part of monastic routine, they were greater artists and produced volumes of surpassing beauty. A still greater interest in studying this art of hand-lettering lay in the knowledge that it soon must become a lost art, for no one could doubt that the printing press had come to stay.

Returning to the office of Aldus, I pause for a moment to read the legend placed conspicuously over the door: 'Whoever thou art, thou art earnestly requested by Aldus to state thy business briefly and to take thy departure promptly. In this way thou mayest be of service even as was Hercules to the

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weary Atlas, for this is a place of work for all who may enter.' But inside the printing office I find Aldus and his associates talking of other things than the books in process of manufacture. They are discussing the sudden change of attitude on the part of the wealthy patrons of the arts who, after welcoming the invention of printing, soon became alarmed by the enthusiasm of the people, and promptly reversed their position. No wonder that Aldus or Jenson should be concerned as to the outcome. The patrons of the arts represented the culture and wealth and political power of Italy, and they now discovered in the new invention an actual menace. To them the magnificent illuminated volumes of the fifteenth century were not merely examples of decoration, but they represented the tribute that this cultured class paid to the thought conveyed, through the medium of the written page, from the author to the world. This jewel of thought they considered more valuable than any costly gem. They perpetuated it by having it written out on parchment by the most accomplished scribes; they enriched it by illuminated embellishments executed by the most famous artists; they protected it with bindings in which they actually inlaid gold and silver and jewels. To have this thought cheapened by reproduction through the commonplace medium of mechanical printing wounded their æsthetic sense. It was an expression of real love of the book that prompted Bisticci, the agent of so powerful a patron as the Duke of Urbino, to write of the Duke's splendid collection in the latter part of the fifteenth century: 'In that library the books are all beautiful in a superlative degree, and all written by the pen. There is not a single one of them printed, for it would have been a shame to have one of that sort.'

Aldus is not alarmed by the solicitude of the patrons for the beauty of the book. He has always known that in order to exist at all the printed book must compete with the written volume; and he has demonstrated that, by supplying to the accomplished illuminators sheets carefully printed on parchment, he can produce volumes of exquisite beauty, of which no collector need be ashamed. Aldus knows that there are other reasons behind the change of front on the part of the patrons. Libraries made up of priceless manuscript-volumes are symbols of wealth, and through wealth comes power. With the multiplication of printed books this prestige will be lessened, as the masses will be enabled to possess the same gems of thought in less extravagant and expensive form. If, moreover, the people are enabled to read, criticism, the sole property of the scholars, will come into their hands, and when they once learn self-reliance from their new intellectual development they are certain to attack dogma and political oppression, even at the risk of martyrdom. The princes and patrons of Italy are intelligent enough to know that their self-centred political power is doomed if the new art of printing secures a firm foothold.

What a relief to such men as Aldus and Jenson when it became fully demonstrated that the desire on the part of the people to secure books in order to learn was too great to be overcome by official mandate or insidious propaganda! With what silent satisfaction did they settle back to continue their splendid work! The patrons, in order to show what a poor thing the printed book really was, gave orders to the scribes and the illuminators to prepare volumes for them in such quantities that the art of hand-lettering received a powerful impetus, as a result of which the hand-letters themselves attained their highest point of perfection. This final struggle on the part of

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the wealthy overlords resulted only in redoubling the efforts of the artist master-printers to match the beauty of the written volumes with the products from their presses.

III

These Arabian Nights experiences occupied me from 1895, when Morris demonstrated the unlimited possibilities of printing as an art, until 1901, when I first visited Italy and gave myself an opportunity to become personally acquainted with the historical landmarks of printing, which previously I had known only from study. In Florence it was my great good fortune to become intimately acquainted with the late Dr. Guido Biagi, at that time librarian of the Laurenziana and the Riccardi libraries, and the custodian of the Medici, the Michelangelo, and the da Vinci archives. I like to think of him as I first saw him then, sitting on a bench in front of one of the carved plutei designed by Michelangelo, in the wonderful Hall of the Medicis in the Laurenziana library, studying a beautifully illuminated volume resting before him, which was fastened to the desk by one of the famous old chains. When I was introduced he greeted me with an old-school courtesy. When he discovered my genuine interest in the books he loved, and realized that I came as a student eager to listen to the master's word, his face lighted up and we were at once friends.

In the quarter of a century which passed from this meeting until his death we were fellow students, and during that period I never succeeded in exhausting the vast store of knowledge he possessed, even though he gave of it with the freest generosity. From him I learned for the first time of the far-reaching influence of the humanistic movement upon everything that had to do with the *litterœ humaniores*, and this new knowledge enabled me to crystallize much that previously had been fugitive. 'The humanist,' Dr. Biagi explained to me, 'whether ancient or modern, is one who holds himself open to receive Truth, unprejudiced as to its source, and — what is more important — after having received Truth realizes his obligation to the world to give it out again, made richer by his personal interpretation.'

This humanistic movement was the forerunner and the essence of the Renaissance, being in reality a revolt against the barrenness of mediævalism. Until then ignorance, superstition, and tradition had confined intellectual life on all sides, but the little band of humanists, headed by Petrarch, put forth a claim for the mental freedom of man and for the full development of his being.

As a part of this claim they demanded the recognition of the rich humanity of Greece and Rome, which was proscribed by the Church. If this claim had been postponed another fifty years the actual manuscripts of many of the present standard classics would have been lost to the world.

The significance of the humanistic movement in its bearing upon the Quest of the Perfect Book is that the invention of printing fitted exactly into the Petrarchian scheme by making it possible for the people to secure books that previously, in their manuscript form, could be owned only by the wealthy patrons. This was the point at which Dr. Biagi's revelation and my previous study met. The Laurenziana library contains more copies of the so-called humanistic manuscripts, produced in response to the final efforts on the part of patrons to thwart the increasing popularity of the new art of printing, than any other single library. Dr. Biagi proudly showed me some of

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these treasures, notably Antonio Sinibaldi's Vergil. The contrast between the hand-lettering in these volumes and the best I had ever seen before was startling. Here was a hand-letter, developed under the most romantic and dramatic conditions, which represented the apotheosis of the art of hand-lettering. The thought flashed through my mind that all the types in existence up to this point had been based upon previous hand-lettering less beautiful and less perfect in execution.

'Why is it,' I demanded excitedly, 'that no type has ever been designed based upon this hand-lettering at its highest point of perfection?'

Dr. Biagi looked at me and shrugged his shoulders. 'This, my friend,' he said, smiling, 'is your opportunity.'

At this point began one of the most fascinating and absorbing adventures in which anyone interested in books could possibly engage. At some time, I suppose, in the life of every typographer comes the ambition to design a special type, so it was natural that the idea contained in Dr. Biagi's remark should suggest possibilities which filled me with enthusiasm. I was familiar with the history of the best special faces, and had learned how difficult each ambitious designer had found the task of translating drawings into so rigid a medium as metal; so I reverted soberly and with deep respect to the subject of type design from the beginning.

In studying the early fonts of type, I found them exact counterfeits of the best existing forms of hand-lettering at that time employed by the scribes. The first italic font cut by Aldus, for instance, was based upon the sharp, thin, inclined handwriting of Petrarch. The contrast between these slavish copies of hand-lettered models and the mechanical precision of characters turned out by modern type-founders made a deep impression. Of the two I preferred the freedom of the earliest types, but appreciated how ill-adapted these models were to the requirements of typography. A hand-lettered page, even with the inevitable irregularities, is pleasing because the scribe makes a slight variation in forming the various characters. When, however, an imperfect letter is cut in metal and repeated many times upon the same page the irregularity forces itself unpleasantly upon the eye. Nicolas Jenson was the first to realize this, and in his famous Roman type he made an exact interpretation of what the scribe intended to accomplish in each of the letters, instead of copying any single hand-letter, or making a composite of many hand-designs of the same character. For this reason the Jenson type has not only served as the basis of the best standard Roman fonts down to the present time, but has also proved the inspiration for later designs of distinctive type-faces, such as William Morris's Golden type, and Emery Walker's Doves type.

William Morris's experience is an excellent illustration of the difficulties a designer experiences. He has left a record of how he studied the Jenson type with great care, enlarging it by photography, and redrawing it over and over again before he began designing his own letter. When he actually produced his Golden type the design was as far removed from the model he selected as can be imagined, showing the strong effect of the German influence that the types of Schöffer, Mentelin, and Günther Zainer made upon him. The Doves type is based flatly upon the Jenson model; yet it is an absolutely original face, retaining all the charm of the model, to which is added the artistic genius of the designer. Each receives its personality from the understanding and interpretation of the creator.

From this I came to realize that it is

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no more necessary for a type-designer to express his individuality by adding or subtracting from his model than for a portrait-painter to change the features of his subject because some other artist has previously painted it. Wordsworth once said that the true portrait of a man shows him, not as he looks at any one moment of his life, but as he really looks all the time. This is equally true of a hand-letter, and explains the vast differences in the cut of the same type-face by various foundries and for the typesetting machines. All this convinced me that if I were to make the humanistic letters the model for my new type I must follow the example of Emery Walker rather than that of William Morris.

IV

During the days spent in the small, cell-like alcove which had been turned over for my use in the Laurenziana library, I came so wholly under the influence of the peculiar atmosphere of antiquity that I felt myself under an obsession of which I have not been conscious before or since. My enthusiasm was abnormal, my efforts tireless. The world outside seemed very far away, the past seemed very near, and I was indifferent to everything except the task before me. This curious experience was perhaps an explanation of how the monks had been able to apply themselves so unceasingly to their prodigious labors, which seem beyond the bounds of human endurance.

My work was at first confined to a study of the humanistic volumes in the Laurenziana library, and the selection of the best examples to be taken as final models for the various letters. From photographed reproductions of selected manuscript pages, I took out fifty examples of each letter. Of these fifty, perhaps a half-dozen would be almost identical, and from these I learned the exact design the scribe endeavored to repeat. I also decided to introduce the innovation of having several characters for certain letters that repeated most frequently, in order to preserve the individuality of the hand-lettering, and still keep my design within the rigid limitations of type. Of the letter *e*, for instance, eight different designs were finally selected; there were five *a*'s, two *m*'s, and so on.

After becoming familiar with the individual letters as shown in the Laurenziana humanistic volumes, I went on to Milan and the Ambrosiana library, with a letter from Dr. Biagi addressed to the librarian, Monsignor Ceriani, explaining the work upon which I was engaged, and seeking his coöperation. It would be impossible to estimate Ceriani's age at that time, but he was very old. He was above middle height, his frame was slight, his eyes penetrating and burning with a fire which showed at a glance that he had come beneath the influence to which I have already referred. His skin resembled in color and texture the parchment of the volumes he handled with such affection, and in his religious habit he seemed the embodiment of ecclesiastical learning of the past.

After expressing his deep interest in my undertaking, he turned to a publication upon which he himself was engaged, the reproduction in facsimile of the first manuscript of Homer's *Iliad*. The actual work on this, he explained, was being carried on by his assistant, a younger priest whom he desired to have me meet. His own contribution to the work was an introduction, upon which he was then engaged, and which, he said, was to be his swan song, the final message from his soul to the world.

'This, I suppose, is to be in Italian?' I inquired.

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He looked at me reproachfully. 'No, my son,' he answered, with deep impressiveness; 'I am writing my introduction in Latin, which, though called a dead language, will be living long after the present living languages are dead.'

Ceriani placed at my disposal the humanistic volumes in the Ambrosiana, and introduced me to his assistant, whose coöperation was of the utmost value in my work. I was particularly struck by the personality of this younger priest. He was in close touch with affairs outside the Church and asked searching questions regarding conditions in America. He spoke several languages with the same facility with which he spoke his own Italian. His knowledge of books and of bookmaking, past and present, surprised me. All in all, I found him one of the most charming men I have ever met. His name was Achille Ratti, and when he became Bishop of Milan in 1921, and was elevated to the College of Cardinals two months later, I realized how far that wonderful personality was taking him. One could scarcely have foreseen, however, that in less than a year from this time he would become Pope Pius XI.

When, after my drawings were finally completed, I returned to America, I took up the matter of the type design with Charles Eliot Norton, my old art professor at Harvard, then emeritus. Professor Norton was genuinely interested in the whole undertaking, and as the proofs of the various punches later came into my hands he became more and more enthusiastic.

I had arranged to use this type in a series of volumes to be published in London by John Murray, and in America by Little, Brown, and Company. An important question arose as to what should be the first title, and after careful consideration I decided that as Petrarch was the father of humanism his *Trionfi* would obviously be an ideal selection. The volume was to be printed in English rather than in the original Italian, and I settled upon Henry Boyd's translation as the most distinguished.

Upon investigation it developed that the original edition of this book was out of print and copies were exceedingly rare. The only one I could find was in the Petrarch collection of the late Willard Fiske. I entered into correspondence with him, and he invited me to be his guest at his villa in Florence. With the type completed and with proofs in my possession, I undertook my second humanistic Odyssey, making Florence my first objective. Professor Fiske welcomed me cordially, and in him I found a most sympathetic personality, eager to contribute in every way to the success of the undertaking. He placed the volume of Boyd's translation in my hands and asked that I take it with me for use until my edition was completed.

'This book is unique, and so precious that you certainly could not permit it to go out of your possession,' I protested.

His answer was characteristic. 'Your love of books,' he said, 'is such that this volume is as safe in your hands as it is in mine. Take it and return it to me when it has served its purpose.'

Then came the matter of illustrations. In London I had a conference with Sir Sidney Colvin, Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum. Colvin had been made familiar with the undertaking by John Murray, who had shown him and Alfred W. Pollard some of the earliest proofs of the punches which I had sent to England. After careful examination of these, both men assured Mr. Murray that his American friend was playing a joke upon him, declaring that the proofs

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were hand-lettered and not taken from metal originals.

'There is a fate about this,' Colvin said after I had explained my mission. 'We have here in the Museum six original drawings of Petrarch's Triumphs, attributed by some to Fra Lippo Lippi and certainly belonging to his school, which have never been reproduced. They are exactly the right size for the format which you have determined upon, and if you can have the reproductions made here at the Museum the drawings are at your disposal.'

I made arrangements with Emery Walker, the designer of the Doves type and famous as an engraver, to etch these six plates on steel, and the reproductions of the originals were extraordinarily exact. Those made for the parchment edition looked as if drawn on ivory.

Parchment was required for the specially illuminated copies which were to form a feature of the edition, and before leaving America I had been told that the Roman was the best. I naturally assumed that I should find this in Rome, but investigation developed the fact that Roman parchment is prepared in Florence. Following this lead, I examined the skins sold by Florentine dealers, but Dr. Biagi assured me that the best grade was not Roman but Florentine, and that Florentine parchment is produced in Issoudun, France. It seemed a far cry to seek out Italian skins in France, but to Issoudun I went. In the meantime I learned that there was a still better grade prepared in Brentford, England — this, in fact, being where William Morris procured the parchment for his Kelmscott publications.

At Brentford I secured my skins; and here I learned something that interested me exceedingly. Owing to the oil which remains in the parchment after it has been prepared for use, the difficulty in printing is as great as if on glass. To obviate this, the concern at Brentford, in preparing parchment for the Kelmscott volumes, filled in the pores of the skins with chalk, producing an artificial surface. The process of time must operate adversely upon this extraneous substance, and the question naturally arises as to whether eventually, in the Kelmscott parchment volumes, the chalk surface will flake off in spots, producing blemishes which can never be repaired.

For my own purposes I purchased the skins in their original condition, and overcame the difficulty in printing by a treatment of the ink which, after much experiment, enabled me to secure as fine results upon the parchment as if printing upon handmade paper.

The volumes were to be printed in the two humanistic colors, black and blue. In the original manuscript volumes this blue is a most unusual shade, the hand-letterer having prepared his own ink by grinding lapis lazuli, in which there is no red. By artificial light the lines written in blue cannot be distinguished from the black. To reproduce the same effect in the printed volume, I secured in Florence a limited quantity of lapis lazuli, and by special arrangement with the Italian Government had it crushed into powder at the royal mint. This powder I brought home to America, and I arranged with a leading manufacturer to produce what I believe to be the first printing-ink mixed exactly as the scribes of the fifteenth century used to prepare their pigments.

The months required to produce the *Triumphs* represented a period alternating in anxiety and satisfaction. The greatest difficulty came in impressing upon the typesetter the fact that the various characters of these letters could not be used with mathematical precision, but that the change should come

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only when he felt his hand would naturally alter the design if he were writing the line instead of setting the type. The experiments required to perfect an ink that should successfully print on the oily parchment were not completed without disappointments and misgivings; the scrupulous care required in reading proofs, perfecting the spacing, was laborious and monotonous; the scrutinizing of the sheets as they came from the press was made happier when the success of the lapis-lazuli ink was assured.

The rewards came when Professor Norton gave the volume his unqualified approval — 'so interesting and original in its typography and in its illustrations, so admirable in its press-work, its paper, its binding, and its minor accessories, a noble and exemplary work of the printers' art'; when George W. Jones, England's greatest artist-printer, selected the humanistic type as 'the most beautiful face in the world,' and promised to use it in what he hopes to be his masterpiece, an edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets; when the jury appointed by the Italian Government to select 'the most beautiful and most appropriate type-face to perpetuate the divine Dante' chose the humanistic type and placed the important commission of producing the definitive edition of the great poet, to commemorate his sexcentennial, in the hands of that splendid printer, Bertieri, at Milan. Such rewards are not compliments, but justification. Such beauty as the humanistic type possesses lies in the artistic ability and the marvelous skill in execution of the scribes. My part was simply seizing the development of a period apparently overlooked, and undertaking the laborious task of translating a beautiful thing from one medium to another.

The Quest of the Perfect Book must necessarily lead the seeker into far varying roads, the greatest rewards being found in straying from the main street into the fascinating bypaths. My quest has resulted in giving me greater appreciation of the accomplishments of those who successfully withstood opposition and persecution in order to make the printed book a living vehicle to convey the gems of thought from great minds to the masses, never forgetful of the value of beauty in its outward aspect. I believe it possible to-day to perpetuate the basic principles of the early artist master-printers by applying beauty to low-cost books as well as to limited editions de luxe. The story of the printed book itself is greater than that contained between the covers of any single volume, for without it the history of the world would show the masses still plodding on swathed in theological and encyclopædic bonds, while the few would still jealously hoard their limited knowledge.

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THE WAY OF A BIRD

BY SIR W. BEACH THOMAS

THE flight of birds has kept mankind wondering from the beginning of days; and the wonder has crept into the literature of most countries since Solomon selected 'the way of an eagle' for first place in his four miracles of the world. He thought so much of it that he classed this physical wonder with spiritual wonders; and perhaps years before he wrote men felt that flight had something angelic in it — as the mediæval artists also persuaded us. Did not the first of great poets use 'winged' as his highest praise even for words?

This age-old wonder remained vague and quite failed to penetrate to the secrets of the mechanics of flight till our own times, till the first human flight in a machine heavier than air was made at Dayton, Ohio. The first flyers, especially the brothers Wright, had watched the flight of birds as studiously as ever did old Dædalus, whose son Icarus was the first (mythical) victim. Many men of science, especially in France, had attempted to investigate the mechanics of the motion, not without success; but they were all baffled — the key was not discovered. Mr. Wilbur Wright, discussing with the writer the relation of man's flight to birds' flight, once went so far as to say that his years of watching taught him nothing *until he himself could fly*. Then he began to learn a great deal from the birds, and a score of little puzzles in the manner and habit of the bigger birds were solved. But even then what he learned was as much about the air as about flight.

The essence of the new manifestation was the use of upward currents of air by creatures in control of apparatus that we call an inclined plane. The winds of heaven move heavenward, as well as horizontally between heaven and earth. Their course is also diagonal or vertical, and only those who have traffic in their conflicting motions know what uses the many angles may serve. The birds know, instinctively and through their delicate senses. For a bird is 'subdued to what it works in.' Quite literally birds are of the air aerial. Even their bones are partly composed of air bubbles. Mr. Wright believes that some birds create the upward current on which they float.

One of the most characteristic birds of the American continent is the buzzard. It is known to urban as well as to rural dwellers; and there is that about its style which irresistibly draws the eye. It loves to fly in short circles, not the long, difficult spirals dear to the lark, and in this it very much resembles 'the whistling eagle,' so called, that is the most characteristic hawk of Australia. The lark seems to climb steep golden stairs under the impulse of an ecstasy of energy inspired by song and love. It makes the long loops to overcome some of the troubles of ascent, and never for a moment limits or arrests the speed of its wing-beats. It threshes the air as a dolphin threshes the waters, cleaving the buoyant and yet resistant medium by the exercise of mere muscular power. The buzzards sometimes rise in short

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spirals, but thereafter revolve, preferably two or three in company, in more or less level circles, with a scarcely credible economy of effort. Their spacious wings, singularly broad at the tips in comparison with those of most birds, move lazily at long intervals. How can a creature weighing some pounds possibly support such a burden so easily? It seems to be a true theory that their circling, though it may not create, yet maintains and assists a natural upward current; and this is firm enough to support them if the plane is cunningly directed to the exact angle of the draft. How very straight upward the air may move we all can see who have watched a cumulus cloud form. As the water condenses round the cold ascending current, the cloud builds its successive stories, as in a Chinese pagoda.

The circling of the buzzards is an extreme example. They seem to float round and round and delicately tilt their angle for mere pleasure in the exercise of their art. It is my belief that they are particularly fond of flying over American towns, because the high buildings and open spaces — perhaps also the heat generated in the polished streets — assist in the formation of the upward movement of the wind. When we have perceived how a line of elm trees will throw the air upward, how a 'pool of silence' is formed on the leeward side, how the sound carried on the wings of this tilted wind becomes audible again only when the draft descends — when we consider such phenomena as these, it becomes a simple inference that the architecture of a town would offer stronger, higher barriers than that of the country, and therefore produce sharper variations in the pattern of the wind.

The upward draft is the secret of all the gliding flight of the long-winged birds. The albatross in its several species is the master artist, but all gulls have high skill. If we divide birds into two classes — and all classifiers have a certain affection for such dichotomy — the gulls are best taken as the representatives of the wide-winged, light-bodied gliders, and the ducks of the heavy-bodied, short-winged, strong-engined flyers. The lesser or the greater albatross will glide interminably, even within a few feet of the surface of the sea. And if you watch an albatross closely you discover two things: that the neighborhood of the ship is a help; and that the rougher the sea, the longer it can pursue the ship without moving its wings. The winds may be compared with the grain of a piece of rather gnarled wood; and by subtle instinctive adaptation of the angle of the plane to the changing direction the birds can use the moving air very much as a sailing ship, which, if need be, can go a point or two into the wind. There are some who believe that the albatross sleeps in the air, suspended high up like a balloon, which is lighter than air. The bird, of course, being heavier than air, cannot merely float; but it is at least probable that even in sleep it can subconsciously preserve its balance, and address itself to the right angle, for any continuous wind will support indefinitely an object slightly heavier than air if it is directed against a broad plane appropriately sloped. It may do much more than this, even when observers are little conscious of its strength. In Switzerland, throughout the Alps the valleys are deep and often wide at the base, narrowing and growing shallower toward their upper parts. The commonest birds are a chough-like species of crow, a family that combines many of the qualities of both gull and duck. You may again and again watch these birds sweep triumphantly upward without stirring a wing. They keep well within the chimney-flue of the valley and find

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there currents of a rapidity quite unsuspected by the observer watching from some plane at the side of an upper peak. Heavy though they are, they shoot upward like down or bubbles or mere feathers. Tennyson wrote better than he knew when he described the rooks as 'blown about the windy sky.'

All airmen know that it is safer to fly high than low; as Wither wrote, in an onomatopœic line that delighted Charles Lamb: 'The more he makes wing, he gets power.' How well the labored monosyllables suggest the pains of climbing! Ascent is hard; but movement becomes a comparatively easy business when at any moment you can attain what speed you will by planing downward in any direction. It is the ascent that is the trouble: *Superasque evadere ad auras, hoc opus, hic labor est.*

C'est le premier pas qui coûte. It is at this point that the heavy short-winged birds that spend most of their life on the ground or water greatly excel the rest. They need and have developed quite other virtues and properties. The engine matters more and the plane less. To save themselves from the commoner dangers they need first of all capacity to accelerate; and since they are not particularly fitted to use the wind, they have developed powers of defying it. It is a liberal education in power to watch a duck of almost any species or variety bore through a tempest. The bird seems to enjoy driving into the very teeth of it, like a steamer escaping from a lee shore. I have seen them on the east coast of Britain come up against a west wind of twenty to thirty miles an hour at an absolute pace somewhere near the equal of the wind they charge. Anatomically, the shortness of the wing and the weight of the body vary in rough proportion with the power of the sinews that hold the socket of the wing. The weighing of the 'elevator' muscles by some aeroplane pioneers brought out this point. The duck resembles the oak tree, which, defying the laws of gravity, compensates for the horizontal spread of heavy-headed boughs by the exceeding toughness of its fibre. As an engine the duck's wing is almost incomparable, though in certain details it is excelled by the pheasant's.

An old controversy hangs around the subject of the fastest bird. The prize used to belong, at least in the opinion of sportsmen, to that little and most typical duck, the teal. So far as I have been able to collate the evidence and compare it with personal experience, the very fastest birds belong to the classes which come between the gulls and ducks. The peregrine falcons and some of the swifts compete for the head of the list; and it is worth notice that the swifts, which people in general class with the swallow tribe, thanks to several real and obvious likenesses, are put by the classifiers as cousins of the hawks. However this may be, it remains that the ducks attain a dazzling speed and can defy the winds better than any bird that flies, though their momentum exaggerates their difficulty in changing direction. But so much depends on the engine that when it is in the least out of gear, when it is not tuned up, as happens at the early moult, they cannot fly at all; they become an animal of land or water, relapsing into the state of their primeval ancestor.

It is interesting to compare the duck as a flyer with the European partridge. The partridge too has a rather short, broad wing, slightly cupped, and is provided with very strong sinews. Being a ground bird it needs, for defense, skill in rapid acceleration. The noise a covey makes in rising is some indication of the speed and power of the wing-beat. But the species has found the ground so congenial, has

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learned to run so fast, that the wings have not wholly responded to the growing weight of the body. In spite of the high speed that the bird reaches, it rarely flies so far as a mile and it tires rapidly. Now and again it has been blown off the coast by a strong wind and carried across the English Channel, to fall exhausted on the shore. There is an accredited instance of the birds being picked up by hand on the south coast of England, as weary and careless of enemies as sometimes are the smaller migrants after a journey of five hundred miles and more. The partridge has affinities with another short-winged bird, the pheasant. Some few of them, as one subspecies on the west coast of Africa, have almost lost the power of flight, and escape their enemies, like the ostrich, by speed of foot; but the majority of pheasants are a good example of the short-winged, quick-flapping bird, further endowed, by the length of the tail, with a tolerably efficient plane. Often I have seen the partridge and the pheasant flushed together. For a few short yards the partridge gains, but the superior 'stream lines' of the pheasant soon tell, and after two hundred yards the bird with the better plane leaves the other far in the lurch.

The power of acceleration, the possession of a strong engine, implies the ability to rise at a sharp angle. We have all noticed how differently birds start their flight. That splendid flyer the rook — or, indeed, the crow or any of the corvine family — likes to hop along and lift itself as deliberately as Mr. Wright's very first aeroplane. The snipe, which was often called in the old chronicles 'the eccentric snipe,' likes to face the wind, prefers to be blown upward; and quickly though it mounts at a later stage, it travels at a very slight angle for the first ten yards or so. The pheasant can perform miracles of abrupt rising, a power perhaps developed by the need of escaping from vermin. Are there any birds that can so nearly approach the vertical at the opening of a flight? They will fly through the upper branches of a high tree at the foot of which they are flushed. The mallard is perhaps a near rival. Suddenly disturbed in a small pond closely hemmed in by the trees of a wood, it will lift straight through the opening without the necessity of threading the branches of a single tree. The speed of both, though it does not appeal to the eye, is very great considering the foot-pounds that it must lift. How many sportsmen it deceives! Either pheasant or duck so flushed will escape the gun of the very elect, if they do not consciously take note of the angle. Some surprising examples of a bird's immunity in such circumstances are found in the sporting annals. If it were a question of attaining the altitude of a hundred feet, the black-headed gull would probably travel at least three times the distance of the route taken by the Mongolian pheasant. It is a common occurrence for a gull to be drowned in stormy weather; and the fatality is due, we may surmise, partly to the wind's purchase on the extensive wing-surface, partly to the bird's inability to leap out of the danger of a sudden wave.

Most of the small birds in most countries conform more nearly to the duck type. They can start quickly in any direction, but there are certain exceptions and every degree of special adaptation. The starling is a fine flyer, in spite of its weight of body. At the same time it is a great imitator of the gulls. The two qualities appear ludicrously on some reaches of the Thames in and about London. Gulls have learned to delight in the town, where they find plenty of food to pick up from the surface of the river. The

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starlings, having watched them with envy, have now taught themselves the same trick. But what heavy weather they make of it! Their wings move at an absurd pace. Instead of gliding at a delicate angle and taking the morsel in their stride, as it were, they flutter abruptly downward, flapping furiously, and by dint of intense muscular effort stay still just long enough to pick up the morsel; but they fail perhaps as often as they succeed.

The swallows and swifts may be said to be the only small birds in the gull division; and they have gifts very nearly peculiar to themselves. The body and skeleton have been lightened by an elaborate apparatus of air sacs, as if nature were striving to produce a craft lighter than air, a tiny airship. This form of adaptation, common in some degree to many birds, has reached its highest development in the swallows, and, accompanied by a wing of considerable length and a tail that is both rudder and plane, it gives them an ease and grace quite their own. They can glide so low as just to dip their wings in the cool water. They can turn and twist with a smoothness that hides the sharpness of the angle. The upper air or lower air is all the same to them. They are so conscious of their mastery that, tender though they are in beak and body and claw, they will chase and mob any enemy. I have many times watched them compel the retreat of a cat by diving at him so close as, you would swear, to touch his ears. The cat did not so much as attempt to strike, and soon retired utterly cowed. We have all seen them mobbing birds of prey and curvetting round them, in repeated arcs, having no trouble to keep pace, though they travel many times the distance. The point has been made by Oliver Wendell Holmes in a charming, if rather elaborate, metaphor, in which he compared their excursions with the thoughts of a nimble-witted listener to a slow preacher. He could wander pleasantly in this direction and that, yet be sure of keeping the thread of the preacher's journey when he might wish to return.

A considerable number of the birds with which we are most familiar seem to desire to be both gulls and ducks. No pattern of flight, for example, is more distinctive than the woodpecker's. He proceeds, as do many of the finches, in a succession of loops or festoons. At any period of active flight he ascends a little, and at every pause he is carried downward by the weight of his body. He loves to plane, but is able only to taste the pleasure of the interminable glide of the albatross. There is reason to think that the starling is progressing in the new art, is becoming more of a gull if not less of a duck.

Some few birds, such as the West African pheasant mentioned above, and perhaps too the extinct dodo of Madagascar, after acquiring wings, by slow development, have degenerated in wing-power owing to a peculiar set of local conditions; but wings were, of course, a late development in the story of evolution. The flying animals, of which there are three classes, — insects, bats, and birds, — all changed other organs into instruments of flight, and reached much the same goal by very different paths. Mechanically, and in some directions, the birds' path has not been the best. The dragon-fly, which has a different mechanism from other insects, is certainly the most able of all the aerial acrobats. Its flight is rapid, and its power of changing direction (a point in which the ducks are peculiarly incapable) is so good that it can dart backward as well as forward. We admire the ingenious flights and sallies of the wagtails in pursuit of insects. The small species seen over English lawns and the larger seen on Australian

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sheep-stations have an incomparable rudder in the long, flexible tail; but how slow and clumsy is the combination of rudder and wing compared with the twin, perfectly socketed and muscled wings of the dragon-fly.

The quickest of the small birds can scarcely exceed thirteen beats a second. The insects attain to 330 (in the house-fly) or 190 (in the bee), and this speed of beat means what one of the writers on games calls 'instantaneousness,' a promptness of alteration in direction of which no bird is capable. Indeed, the insects' nearest rival is the bat. Nevertheless the bird has done most with its gift of flight. It learned the art, we may presume, by gliding from the trees to which it had retreated to escape from the dangers of the ground. Anatomically, it has been demonstrated that while the bat is theoretically liable to breathlessness, like other quadrupeds, or like the man who runs or swims against the handicap of his lungs, the bird actually evades breathlessness by means of motion. The stress is on expiration, as Professor Thompson has shown, not inspiration; and the mechanism of flight, operating on the otherwise inelastic lungs, keeps the bird in breath, assures the rhythm of aeration.

The spiritual and material truth is that the bird has sublimated its whole being by attuning it to this newborn power. No animal leads an intenser life. Its heart beats quickly. The blood that gives it animation is arterial and the temperature high. The brain is large. The senses of seeing and hearing are acute and the wits alert. Spiritually many birds have attained to monogamy. Their loves are truly lyric, to use Browning's adjective; and between the bouts of recurrent parenthood are long spaces for the enjoyment of the free play of a wider life, for change, for the ecstasy of the migration flight.

EXIT PROFESSOR

BY FRANCIS B. GUMMERE

'Exit,' of course, is euphemism. Here is no Abdiel, who marches out with retorted scorn, but an incompetent who is to be put out; a lost job is in question, rather than a lost cause. 'Professor,' too, is indefinite. The professor of tradition, amiable, irresponsible, innocuous, went out as a type more than a generation ago: he no longer hunts manuscripts in a romance, or forgets his own name in the post office, or trails debilitated love-stories over the stage. The futility which is laid to the revered professor's charge is not of that amiable kind, and it attaches not to practised arts. He left, however, upon certain of his kind the generic curse of futility; and it is this curse, unknown to useful disciplines, such as chemistry and engineering, that determines the impending expulsion and names as victims the professors of the humanities, of the vernacular literature, of history, of æsthetic — in short, of whatever is founded upon traffic with the past. The gravamen's in that. What seemed to be this professor's glory, as well as his salvation,

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has become his ruin and his crime. It is not his Latin and Greek, as the vulgar think; in the majority of cases he is still the same pedant of record, who will not let the dead past bury its dead; who uses protective coloring, from the flannels of the athlete to the singing robe of a new poet; who teaches for his bread and butter, and formalizes inutilities for the delectation of a second-rate mind.

The publishers of textbooks fight for him, but in vain: his hour is come. His chief accusers are the young men who write our new literature of power, because they are strong — young men mainly of that fine racial blend, that interchangeable nationality, which puts to shame our commonplace Americanism of two centuries. They are going to give this grammarian a worthy funeral. His obituary is ready. One might even fancy that the sympathetic hand which penned the memorial of an extinct type of scholarship in the person of Abbé Coignard had undertaken the same task for this moribund professor in the books that deal with Monsieur Bergeret; only in the latter case Anatole France makes his reader feel with himself that there is no need that this sort of professor should ever die. 'Sa vie médiocre et difficile,' to be sure, is just a gloss of Mr. A. C. Benson's blunt word about the teacher's calling, — 'it is a dingy trade,' — but where Mr. Benson only scoffs, M. France goes on to praise the compensations of this life — 'embellie, cependant, par les riches travaux de la pensée.' Yet it is Anatole France himself who is credited (do the strong young men really read him?) with the purpose of making the professor's research as superseded and obsolete as the Abbé's learning — labor that the strong young men regard, not only as the last word in futility, but as an active menace to their own benevolent nihilism.

The first business of this revolution of theirs is to destroy the old monuments, and to abolish the old standards. This is enjoined by example in Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* and by the theory in the uneven cleverness of his *Notebooks;* by Nietzsche in dithyrambs, and by the cool and ordered æsthetic of Croce; by the converts to the new criticism, and by the leaders of the new party. All are bound to break up literary traffic with the past. But the professor blocks the way. For research in humane letters is the professor's life; the inheritance of learning is his care. In the banks and trust companies of his order, and on the literary exchanges, he guards and arranges and keeps valid and appraises the very securities of erudition; in a word — an ugly word, for truth will out — he is the capitalist of the world of letters; and the destructive processes of the strong young men are thus perfectly justified.

You see their scheme from here: abolish this capitalist along with his capital, his gold standard, his tests of efficiency; and the six-hour day — what need of six or five, or 'what need one'? — follows inevitably for the day laborer of letters. Much is mere eccentric protest, ranging from Butler's acerbity in *The Way of All Flesh,* through Tolstoi's crudities and Mr. Shaw's paradox, to the irresponsible but alarming gossip in *Vale* of Mr. George Moore. Whole regiments of criticism are in defection; and even in academic ranks, where the classics ought to get their chief support, so many young men have written plays 'strategically and technically far superior to the best of the Elizabethans' that the master's mastership is suspect.

So it goes too with fiction. 'Every man his own short-story writer' is the ideal which inspires most of the college courses in English composition. In regard to poetry, the commandment

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is to write it, rather than to read it. As in the days of Pliny the Younger, so now; Mr. Braithwaite reports each year his *magnum proventum poetarum*. To make the production less toilsome, free verse has been revived — free and easy verse. For Browning's 'rock' is not 'the song-soil,' it would seem.

'Yes,' says one, 'but is this new? Is it not the inevitable democratic movement, begun two centuries ago and just now coming to its own? Is not this the people's poetry, as eighteenth-centurians dreamed of it — the folk in verse, the living voice, and all that?'

Not at all. This socialism in letters is receptive, not creative. The folk, as folk, have nothing to say about it. As literature it is intensely individual. It looks neither forward nor back; it does not even look about; it excludes all that social and collective judgment on which critics used to rely, and to which romance gave such lofty names.

Now it is not merely the humanities that are in question when Jack Cade the Journalist insists on burning all the records of the literary realm, and upon doing to death all men 'that usually talk of a noun and a verb and such abominable words.' For 'Away with him; he speaks Latin!' is stale condemnation. 'Off with his head, if he speaks Old English or Shakespeare!' is the cry to be noted. A modern professor of English literature is said to have persuaded the authorities to drop Anglo-Saxon from the university tripos in English. So anxious is he to remove the taint of erudition from his new calling, and to give the professor a chance to save the situation, that he has some specific words for the type of scholar — men of research — who 'cannot distinguish Vergil from Bavius.' There, indeed, are the men who muddle in Anglo-Saxon, not the men of taste who appreciate real poetry and can 'distinguish' Milton from Cædmon! He would banish the pedant and retain the critic.

Well, let it be so. Write 'Exit Pedantry' and save the pedants by converting them to criticism, appreciation, and other pleasant ways of wisdom. It is indeed alleged that some call the headquarters of all critical anarchists a refuge for the very band of expatriated pedants themselves. It will be said, indeed, with a formidable list of names in proof, that the professor is saving his occupation and has forsworn research; that he is moving out of that crazy old tenement of scholarship, and is taking rooms in the solid apartment-house of criticism, precisely as sundry churchmen, for fifty years and more, have been changing ritual and dialectic and the Thirty-nine Articles for the higher sociology and social service. Nay, he goes further: he is practical; he leaves criticism for actual experiment, giving positive instruction, not, as of old, in the mere art of writing, but in the craft of letters, turning out journalists, novelists, playwrights, and so forth.

Now this leap from research to criticism and appreciation and actual practice may seem to be a winning move. But it will not save the professor from the clutch of the strong young men unless, indeed, he will forswear what is called literature, make a clean breach with the past, and use as textbooks in his classroom only the periodical itself, where these trumpet-blasts are blown at the crumbling walls of literary tradition. If he still thinks it worth while to 'distinguish Vergil from Bavius' and play the critic — and most of our professors do this out of old habit and prejudices — he will have to know in what Vergil's excellence consists, and to know this he must know the dialect of excellence; so criticism must call in the aid of research, and one is caught in the vicious circle.

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ITALIAN TYRANNY: AN ANTI-FASCIST VIEW

BY JAMES MURPHY

I

THREE years ago I came to Italy to follow the fortunes of Fascism, which was then at the zenith of its popularity and power. The land was athrill with hope and faith in the movement. That faith amounted almost to a definite vision of the new dispensation of peace and prosperity that Fascism was to usher in. Everybody was singing or humming or whistling *Giovinezza*. Even the wheels of the Pullman seemed to take up the triumphant strains and chant them down the ringing grooves of the long way from Modane to Turin, to Genoa, to Pisa, and to Rome. Through some mysterious operation of mass psychology I too felt myself seized by the same emotion as I crossed the Alps and passed into the land of sunshine. When I arrived in the Eternal City I found all my old friends full of faith and confidence in the destinies of the new régime. Fascism was the sun of the political future. True to her historical traditions, Italy had once again come to the assistance of Europe in its hour of agony and disaster. She had discovered a new political formula which would solve the riddle that had puzzled the brains of European statesmen ever since the camp fires had been quenched in 1918.

Delusion. There is not a sadder or more sordid chapter in the modern history of Europe. No government in recent times has had such a golden opportunity as did that of Signor Mussolini. In November 1922, he had at his back the whole of Italy and the active sympathy of neighboring nations. Representatives from all the great constitutional parties — Liberals and Populists and Democrats — joined his Cabinet. The press of these parties gave loyal and generous support. Famous statesmen of the old régime, such as Giolitti and Salandra and Orlando, lent the aid of their political ability and experience. The Vatican sent an order to the bishops all over the country to help the new government. Even the Socialists did not stand in the way, for leaders like Turati and Treves and D'Aragona expressly adopted the policy of giving Fascism a fair chance to carry out its programme of reconstruction and restoration.

What is the state of affairs to-day? Not a single non-Fascist statesman or political leader is now associated with Mussolini's régime. The Liberals and Populists and Democrats have all left the Cabinet. Giolitti and Orlando and Salandra have definitely gone over to the Opposition; and the nonparty ministers, General Diaz and General Di Giorgio and Admiral Thaon Di Revel, have also deserted. All the important newspapers of the country have followed suit; not a single journal of repute supports Fascism now, except its own subsidized and controlled party organs. Besides fulfilling the office of Premier, Mussolini is now also Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister

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of War, Minister of Marine, Minister of Aviation, and so on. And he is all these at one and the same time, not because he is anxious to hold all power in his own hands, but primarily and principally because no man of outstanding ability and public repute can be induced to accept a portfolio in the Fascist Cabinet. When not only respectable passengers, but also the legally certified officers, abandon their posts and take to boats, leaving a self-appointed captain alone on the bridge, something must be radically wrong with the methods whereby the ship of state is being navigated. That is the most obvious and striking phase of the Italian political situation at the present moment.

How has it come about? What are its immediate causes? What precisely are the mistakes in navigation which have driven the legitimate officers from the ship? To these questions I can now give a fuller and fairer answer than I could have given while I lived in Italy; for I have recently recrossed the Alps, in the company of several Italian political refugees.

II

It is difficult to understand the policy of wrong-headedness that Mussolini has persistently followed since the early months of 1923. The problem is one of psychopathy rather than of politics. Therefore I shall not risk a discussion of it here. The historical facts are as follows. For the first few months after taking over legislative power Mussolini showed himself agreeable to the idea of allowing the people of Italy to be governed in a legal and constitutional manner. But before the spring of 1923 was far advanced the Dictator returned to his old ideas of violence and accepted the coöperation of some of the baser satellites with whom he had been associated in Milan. The precise period at which these henchmen began to function as official instruments of government is not easy to fix. But we shall not be far wrong if we associate it with the organized attack against the ex-Fascist deputy Misuri, on May 29, 1923. Misuri had just made a speech in the Chamber, criticizing the ways of the Fascist Government, and at the break-up of the sitting Mussolini openly threatened to have him punished. The assault followed almost immediately. Misuri has declared in the press (*Il Popolo*, December 21, 1924) that Mussolini gave orders for the assault, and nobody has ever contradicted this statement.

The Misuri incident may at first sight seem a rather stale topic of discussion, but I have recalled it here for a special purpose. I wish to alter the angle of vision from which it has hitherto been looked at in the foreign press, and, as a consequence, to alter the angle of vision from which all such crimes have been looked at. The Misuri incident is a definite landmark that probably marks the first official operation of the Cheka in its official functioning as a normal organ of government. We can never hope to understand the present state of affairs in Italy if we continue to attribute such incidents as the attacks on Misuri, Amendola, Forni, and so forth, to the general spirit of violence that has been characteristic of Fascism as a popular movement since its foundation. These incidents, and darker crimes of which we shall speak later, have no connection with Fascism as a popular movement. There is overwhelming evidence to show that they are the official acts of the official Cheka. Therefore they must not be confounded with the more or less sporadic outbursts of violence that appear from time to

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time throughout the country, mainly due to local animosities or to the clash of local personal interests.

An understanding of what the Cheka means, how it was founded, and how it functions, is a necessary preliminary to any honest study of the Fascist régime. The story of how the Cheka was definitely established and organized is told in an affidavit drawn up by Signor Finzi, Undersecretary at the Ministry of the Interior. He penned his document immediately after the Matteotti murder, when he had reason to fear that he was about to be made a scapegoat; he laid the document before three gentlemen who were in close touch with the leaders of the Opposition. The whole story is authoritatively told in the indictment drawn up against General De Bono and laid before the Senate by Dr. Donati, editor of the Populist organ, *Il Popolo*. Last June the Grand Jury of the Senate gave its decision and failed to find a true bill against De Bono. As the matter is no longer *sub judice* we may cite Donati's indictment as a piece of historical evidence throwing a welcome light on some dark patches of current Italian history.

In his solemn accusation Dr. Donati writes of the Cheka as follows:—

'The criminal association — or the Cheka, as it is more commonly called — bound together under a pact of mutual common action in crime the highest leaders of Fascism (Rossi, Marinelli, and so forth), the professional assassins (Dumini, Volpi, and so forth), and the nonofficial coadjutors (*Corriere Italiano*, Filippelli, and so forth). It had its headquarters in a government building, the Viminal, where Senator De Bono also has his dual headquarters, as Director-General of Police and Chief of the Militia.

'The Cheka, which had already existed in embryonic form, was endowed with a regular constitution of its own at a meeting held in the private residence of the Premier, in the Via Rasella. Among those present was General De Bono, who had already been appointed Director-General of Police and First Commander-General of the Militia. There is explicit mention of this meeting in the affidavit drawn up by Finzi, which was submitted to three gentlemen who can give evidence as to its contents. These are Signor Schiff Giorgini, Commendatore Guglielmo Emanuel, head of the Roman office of the *Corriere della Sera*, and the journalist Carlo Silvestri. This is also borne out by the evidence which these gentlemen have already given before the Crown Prosecutor and confirmed by Finzi himself in a recent conversation which he had with Silvestri. Therefore the Cheka represented a constitutional organ of the Fascist Party and the Fascist Government.

'As we shall see, the Cheka was entrusted with a twofold task: (1) to spy attentively on all movements of political parties and persons opposed to Fascism, also on lukewarm friends and open dissenters; (2) to suppress the more dangerous adversaries by violence "in style,"[1] under an astute system of protection which ensured the

[1] *Bastonatura in stile* (bastonadoing in style) is the technical phrase used in the orders sent out from the headquarters of the National Militia. It stands for a distinct type of cudgeling, and those who are entrusted with the task have been specially trained in the barracks, where they have a dummy figure on which they practise. The weapon used is a specially made bludgeon which is rather heavy toward the end and is somewhat flexible. Most of the blows are inflicted on the lower part of the face, for the purpose of breaking the jawbone and thus laying up the victim for months. Care is taken not to fracture the skull, lest death may ensue. This is of great importance when such men as Amendola are to be punished, for the murder of another deputy would bring ruin on Fascism.

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impunity of the assassins and their paymasters.

'The executive of the Cheka is identical with the General Command of the Militia. The General Command recruited the hired assassins, furnished the material and financial means, arranged the plans, gathered information, provided — through the office of the Premier's press agency (Cesare Rossi) — for the "working up" of public opinion, and made arrangements with the police authorities to guarantee the impunity of the direct culprits.

'The Cheka was considered as an instrument "necessary for the government of the country," according to the literal expression used by Finzi in his affidavit. To this Cheka organization we are to attribute the well-known acts of violence committed against the deputies Mazzolani, Misuri, Buffoni, Amendola, Forni, Ciriani, Bergamini, Nitti, and the journalist Giannini; also the murder of Father Giovanni at Argenta, the murder of the laborer Antonio Piccini, Socialist candidate in Reggio Emilia, and the murder of James Matteotti.'

III

The statements made above have been corroborated by the Rossi and Filippelli memoranda, by the sworn confessions published by numbers of ex-Fascists, by General Balbo's letter dealing with the Minzoni murder, which was produced in court last year, and by several witnesses who have already given evidence before the Crown Prosecutor in connection with the forthcoming Matteotti trial. Moreover, though the Grand Jury of the Senate decided that Dr. Donati had not supplied sufficient evidence to warrant a true bill being found against De Bono as an actual accomplice in the Matteotti murder, they did not deny Donati's main thesis. They even admitted the existence of the Cheka, speaking of it in the text of the judgment which they gave as 'the committee which had been organized against the enemies of Fascism.'

I have somewhat labored this affair of the Cheka simply because it furnishes the master key to the whole situation in Italy to-day. By the establishment of the Cheka all pretense of constitutional government was thrown to the winds. When the whole question of the Cheka and its crime came before Parliament on the third of last January, following the publication of the Rossi memorandum, Mussolini said: 'I declare before the whole Italian people that I accept the moral, political, and historical responsibility for all that has been done.' This open and formal acknowledgment caused the secession of all non-Fascist members from the Cabinet, and also the passing over to the Opposition of Salandra, Giolitti, and Orlando. The Fascist Minister of Justice also resigned. The explicit motive for this wholesale desertion on the part of responsible statesmen was that they could not continue to be associated with a government that had openly approved a criminal organization as a normal organ of public rule.

Before I come to trace the widespread and intricate ramifications of the Cheka and to explain its operations, I must open a rather lengthy parenthesis in order to disclose certain historical facts which must be borne in mind if we are to understand how such a régime comes to be tolerated by a monarchy which has sworn to uphold the Italian Constitution. If statesmen like Giolitti and Orlando and Salandra could not be associated with Mussolini, because of his nonconstitutional methods and his open acknowledgment of

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crime as an instrument of government, why did not the King immediately call for his resignation? All constitutionalists hold that it was the King's sworn duty to do so. Not only does Victor Emmanuel not bow to this opinion, but he has recently made it plain on more than one occasion that Mussolini enjoys the favor and confidence of his Sovereign. What is the explanation? I repeat the current explanation that is given in the inner political circles of Italy. I can vouch for the truth of the historical facts as stated; but I do not wish to risk an opinion as to whether these facts adequately explain the present attitude of King Victor Emmanuel III.

We must go back to the episode of the 'March on Rome.' The Fascist propagandists usually dress up that event in military trappings that outrival those of Napoleon's Grand Army on the road to Moscow. Mussolini has recently got into the habit of perorating about the three thousand dead that they left by the wayside. Contemporary historical research, however, has definitely established the fact that one boy succumbed to the fatigue of the march — that is the full casualty list of the great Fascist anabasis. The propagandists also talk of the three hundred thousand armed Black Shirts then ready for the fray; but they admit that only fifty thousand actually came to Rome. The plain truth is that about eight thousand Black Shirts took an actual part in the march to Rome; they were badly armed and they had no properly organized commissariat. Monterotondo was their rallying-point in the neighborhood of Rome. General Badoglio, who was head of the Army Intelligence Department, assured the Government that he would scatter the whole lot in a few hours with one regiment of soldiers. On October 27 the King advised the Government to declare martial law, and the decree was decided upon that evening at a meeting of the Cabinet. On the following morning it was posted throughout the country, and the local Fascists began to melt away like grease spots under the iron. Panic set in at Monterotondo. What if the plan should miscarry?

For there was a plan, whereby the Black Shirts had been guaranteed a peaceful entry into the Eternal City. At a meeting held in Florence some time previously, attended by Fascist emissaries, a few of the army chiefs, and some members of the Nationalist-Imperialist Party, it was agreed that the march on Rome should be attempted. D'Annunzio was offered the leadership, but he refused. General Peppino Garibaldi was then asked to head the Fascist ranks, but he also declined the honor. No further offers were made and the Fascists were left without any leader of recognized valor or prestige. At the meeting in Florence it was agreed that if the Government should use the army to drive back the Black Shirts, and if a serious encounter should occur between the contending parties, the Duke of Aosta would intervene. Both the army and the Fascists would obey him; for he is extremely popular in military circles. His intervention would necessarily involve the abdication of King Victor Emmanuel III and the appointment of the Duke of Aosta as Regent. It is only fair to say that this arrangement was a very general one and was dependent on many eventualities. A mass meeting of Fascists was held at Naples on October 24. The Duke of Aosta betook himself to Spoleto, within motor drive of Rome. When the Fascists were gathered in the San Carlo Theatre at Naples they received the following telegram from Rome: 'Venite. La pappa è pronta, le mense sono imbandite. Non

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avrete che a sedervi a tavola.' (Come. The viands are cooked. The meal is served. You have only to take your places at the table.) The meeting broke up and the march to Rome began. But Mussolini traveled to Milan and there watched how the fortunes of battle would go.

When Premier Facta went to the King, on the morning of October 28, for the royal signature to the martial-law decree, Victor Emmanuel III refused to sign. What had happened on the night of October 27–28 to alter the mind of the King? A group of National-Imperialists visited him at his family residence on the outskirts of Rome in the early hours of the morning of October 28. They told him that the Duke of Aosta was at Spoleto with eighty thousand armed Fascists, and that he intended to seize the Crown. They also declared that the army would not obey the orders of the King. The story had only a small foundation in fact, for the Duke had no armed followers at Spoleto. But the King evidently believed what he had been told, and took a drastic course. He refused to sign the martial-law decree. Then he opened negotiations with Mussolini through the Milan Prefect, and eventually offered Mussolini the premiership. The latter saw his opportunity and seized it. The King had made Mussolini, and Mussolini had saved the King. It is now said that this initial pact is the principal reason why the King still maintains Mussolini in power. To my thinking, that is only a part of the explanation. We shall see later that there are other forces at play which are less contingent and more fundamental.

IV

Let us return to the Cheka. The spy system is the most extensive branch of the organization. At the beginning of the present year emissaries were appointed to watch over all the state and provincial and municipal bureaucracies throughout the country. Their business is to report on the state of mind of the employees. If an unfortunate civil servant, for instance, should express views unfavorable to Fascism, he is at once reported to headquarters. Sometimes an order will be sent forthwith, transferring him to some distant part of the country. If he happens to be a family man he is ruined; for it would be impossible for him to think of transferring house and home on the miserable salary which a civil servant receives. Obviously the Government now finds that this system of persecution is not sufficiently drastic. Therefore it has introduced a new law, which declares that all public functionaries may be dismissed on a notice of twenty-four hours if their conduct is such as to create the suspicion that they are not enthusiastic supporters of the régime. This law extends to magistrates and judges.

A system of espionage is set up also in the offices of large concerns which are not under government control, especially banks and joint-stock companies, and large corporations. Negotiations passing between the banks and trading concerns are reported to headquarters. If the trading concern in question happens to be outside the ring of Fascist interests the bank is at once asked not to extend financial facilities. And the bank cannot now very well refuse; because, according to the new decrees passed since Signor Volpi became Finance Minister, the banks are practically under the thumb of the Ministry of Finance. They are now bound by law to make a daily report of their transactions to the Finance Ministry.

Another interesting department of surveillance is that which is installed

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in the post office. When a name is sent to the Cheka as that of a nonsympathizer, orders are sometimes given to stop the mail addressed to the individual in question, whether he is a foreigner or an Italian subject. This is especially so if he has anything to do with journalism or politics. Here I can speak from personal experience; for my own mail has been seized, and checks sent to me in payment for work published abroad were sequestrated. In that matter I have made assurance doubly sure. Since I left Italy I have sent several letters to myself, all directed to the usual address; but they have not been delivered. In each case they contained references to imaginary articles published abroad.

In the administration of justice the Cheka plays a very important part. The police have to take their orders from it. They are sent to search private residences and arrest peaceful citizens who have committed no offense against the law. To take some cases in point: Last June, Count Cesare Sforza was arrested and thrown into prison at Massa because he had a requiem Mass said in his private chapel on the anniversary of Dr. Matteotti's death. He still remains in prison, sharing his cell with common criminals, and no charge has been preferred against him. Professor Salvemini was arrested last summer and thrown into prison in Florence because some anti-Fascist literature was found in his home. There is no writ of habeas corpus in Italy. You may be thrown into jail without any charge having been made; you may remain there for several months and then be released without even the compliment of an apology. There is no legal redress and no legal defense. That is one of the reasons why so many non-Fascist Italians have to play the coward's part to-day.

In the courts one sees the same system in operation. When a Fascist is brought to trial there is apt to be a gang of armed militia in the court. They intimidate the witnesses and the attorneys. In such circumstances there is small possibility of securing an impartial judgment from judge or jury. It would be useless to labor this point. One cannot take up an Italian paper day after day without finding reports of such instances as I have mentioned; and almost every week there are protests from the law associations against this wholesale suppression of justice.

Taking a general glance at the whole position as I have stated it, the reader will probably be inclined to ask how it is that such a régime is tolerated by a civilized people in the midst of all those European nations that have poured out their treasure and their blood and their tears to save their liberties from the threat of an oppression which certainly could not have turned out more unbearable than that of Fascism. The answer to the question is many-sided. Here I can only touch on a few of its more obvious phases.

In the first place let us take the negative side of the explanation. Italy is now in a position of political independence such as she has not hitherto enjoyed. Austria has been destroyed. If Austria were in her old position on the Alps, and if the Hapsburg Empire were still in existence, Fascism would be impossible in Italy. There is no danger from France. Though there are upward of a million Italians in that country, many of whom are political refugees from Fascist oppression, they are only vaguely talking about raising forces to cross the Alps and free their native land from the grip of the internal tyrant, as French troops once before helped to free her from the yoke

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of the stranger. A well-known member of the Garibaldi family is once again in France, and a formidable association called the 'Garibaldi Legion' flourishes on the free soil of the French Republic. But times have changed. Europe is tired of war. Foreign nations are willing to stand any amount of truculence from Mussolini because they dread the risk of raising anything like serious international questions at the moment.

When we come to Italy's economic dependency the case is far more serious. Italy has practically no raw materials for her industries, for she has no coal or iron supplies. She cannot grow sufficient foodstuffs to support her people. Therefore she must import heavily from abroad. Her yearly deficit in the balance between imports and exports is now about 300,000,000 dollars. This means that Italy has to get a generous share of credit abroad, and she cannot count steadily on that favor unless she enjoys the confidence and good will of the nations with which she trades. Moreover, as her labor is one of her principal exports, it is absolutely essential for her that her citizens should be welcome abroad.

Therefore the Fascists are striving with might and main to maintain confidence and good will abroad, especially among banking and large commercial interests. For this reason they have organized a system of propaganda to convince outsiders that the economic and financial position of the country has steadily bettered under the Fascist régime. To bring this fact home to outsiders they have given to the public a state budget which has little or no relation to the real financial condition. It is simply a piece of propaganda. I should not make such a statement without being in a position to bring forward proof. Take De Stefani's budget for 1923–24. For that year I find that under one heading alone there was an expenditure of fourteen billions of lire (700,000,000 dollars) not a cent of which is debited in the state budget. The expenditure was officially announced in the *Official Gazette* (June 27, 1924, page 16). It figures in the Treasury accounts, but it is carefully kept out of the budget that has been published. That sum alone would practically consume the whole income from taxation for the same year. Therefore De Stefani's first budget had really a much heavier deficit than those of his predecessors, even if we confine the deficit to the above expenditure and say nothing of other Treasury debts incurred. To keep all such questions dark, the press is muzzled and foreign journalists are watched and persecuted lest they begin to pry into the question of Italy's finances. By such means and by the expenditure of huge sums for propaganda abroad, the Fascists think that they will be able to stave off the day when their real economic and financial position may become known to foreign bankers and foreign industrialists.

V

So much for the negative side of the reply. On the positive side the question may be put thus: What are the stable and abiding forces behind Fascism? There must be some group of strong and well-established interests whose policy and profit Fascism serves. What are they? The answer is simple. They are the monarchy and the plutocracy.

Let us take the monarchy first. I have already suggested some reasons why the King is personally favorable to Mussolini. But when I speak here of the monarchy I do not mean the King alone, but rather the whole dynastic clan with its feudatories and beneficiaries. These must not be confounded

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with the aristocracy; for, though they form part of it, the aristocracy embraces a much wider and more indeterminate class. We may therefore speak of them as the court party.

There is nothing to show that this party has any brotherly feeling for the Fascists or that they are in sympathy with Fascist vulgarity and violence. But they are operating under cover of the Fascist terror to transform the laws and constitution of Italy so that these latter will no longer bear the democratic imprint of the *Risorgimento;* to sweep away the whole democratic substructure and build on its site a system somewhat on the plan of the old Prussian régime. The court party would have a place corresponding to that of the Prussian Junkers. It would form a privileged ruling caste entrenched behind the bulwark of the Crown.

This court party is represented in the Mussolini Cabinet by the national imperialists Federzoni and Rocco, Minister of Justice. It is from this source that most of the recent laws have arisen, which enslave the press, condemn the formation of societies such as the Freemasons, and place the bureaucracy and judiciary absolutely at the mercy of the Government. The idea is to create a huge state and municipal bureaucracy which will be the faithful watchdog of the monarchy and its privileged caste — on every office stool in every state department, on every teaching-chair in school or college or university, and in every town hall throughout all the 9200 municipalities into which the people of Italy are civically grouped. In other words, the court party would hold central control over all the subordinate forces that formulate and direct public opinion. In bringing about this condition of affairs the Cheka is doing the unpleasant work for the time being. But once that unpleasant work is accomplished, the Cheka will be cast off, just as a victorious general discards the army spies once the vanquished foe has rendered up the sword.

The plutocracy works hand in hand with the court party to sustain the Fascist sway during this transitory period. To understand what the plutocracy means we must rèalize that capitalism in Italy has a character and constitution peculiar to that country. There is no wealthy class. The people do not invest their money directly in large commercial and industrial undertakings — they take it to the savings departments of the banks. The banks, in their turn, finance and control industrial and commercial concerns. That is the general rule, which naturally has its exceptions. Therefore in Italy you have a parasitic plutocracy of a peculiar type. It is not large enough to form a class, but is a very strong clique or caste. It finances the Fascist Party and the Fascist press. In return it receives privileges which consolidate its own position. For instance, the fiscal policy of Fascism has considerably lightened the burden of taxation for the wealthy classes and transferred it to the proletariat. Foodstuffs are now taxed to the last potato and the last head of cabbage to be gathered in field or garden; but the death duties have been abolished, and also the tax on the profits made by large corporations. Another return that the large banking groups receive for their support is in the shape of state concessions and monopolies and public contracts. The latter are now no longer open to public tender, but they are always conceded privately by the Government. This period, however, is only transitory. When the banking groups have the State fully in their hands, and their

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vested interests are bound up with the prosperity of the State, they will look for more able and more economic managers than the Fascists. When that hour comes the doom of Fascism will have sounded; for at the present moment Fascism is utterly dependent on the funds that are forthcoming from the plutocracy. Therefore Fascism must eventually pass.

What will be the result for the people of Italy? On the whole I think that the Fascist movement will have brought at least one blessing in its train. It will have taught a bitter lesson to the Italian populace. That populace has not hitherto taken the public interests of its country with the same seriousness that one finds elsewhere. The Italians of the rank and file have been split up into more than a score of political sects, and have hitherto had no real political party. When they wake up from the nightmare of Fascism they will find that their common rights have been legislatively filched from them in the meantime. Arrayed against them will be the organized vested interests of the plutocracy and the privileged caste solidly phalanxed around the monarchy. That privileged caste will have its supporters placed in every position of control throughout the country — press, schools, army, police, judiciary, municipalities, state bureaucracy, and so forth. It will present a united front, and can be fought only by a united front.

The pinch of poverty and the stress of life and the unequal burden of taxation will force the populace to take a serious interest in public affairs. Then you will have the disappearance of all the sects — the Liberals of the Right and the Liberals of the Left, the Giolittian Liberals and the Nittian Democrats, the Populists and the Republicans and the Communists and the Maximalists and the Reformist Socialists and the numerous other political denominations that have hitherto formed the bewildering mosaic of Italian political life. Already there are signs of all these dissenters uniting into one great national bloc, as we saw recently at the Sicilian local elections. That bloc will probably be antimonarchical and will have the court party opposed to it. Thus there will be two great parties on much the same lines as the Liberals and Tories in England during the most classic period of British parliamentary life. It will not be a bad thing for Italy and may possibly lead directly to an era of peace and prosperity for the Italian nation. That, at least, is my own hope and belief.

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THE TWILIGHT LAND OF TAXATION

BY RAYMOND EDWARDS HUNTINGTON

I

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, with a typically happy and colorful expression, described the interrelationship between Federal and State Government on commerce and taxation as 'Twilight Land.' Admitting the aptness of his description as far as death taxes are concerned, of late years a bewildering fog has settled upon the Twilight Land, becoming most dense in the year 1924.

Double taxation flourishes here in the United States as perhaps in no other country. Why? At first glance American indifference or good nature may appear to be the answer; but the underlying reason for this indifference is a lack of knowledge of what has actually been going on. Let the American citizen once grasp the facts of the situation and he will inform his representatives in both State and Federal Governments in no uncertain terms that the sore spots in the system of taxation must be cauterized.

It is hardly reasonable to assume that the vicious overlapping- or multiple-tax evil sprang into being through the deliberate intent of our lawmakers. The fog that shrouds the Twilight Land lies thickest on the situation between States. Here again the present jumble is due to ignorance on the part of our offending lawmakers as to death-tax laws in surrounding or competing States, combined with a wholly human desire to get the money first and revise the laws later. I say 'ignorance,' because it is already evident, as the spotlight of publicity is being turned upon certain ill-advised and shortsighted phases of this taxation, that these mistakes would not have been legislated into existence if our legislators had quietly stepped back and taken a long-range view of the entire situation.

Until comparatively recently each State has been too much concerned with her own death-tax laws and has ignored those of her neighbors, with the result that not only her neighbor's citizens, but her own as well, have suffered. In far too many cases States have enacted death taxes hastily without first carefully considering the economic effects.

For instance, let me quote a portion of the last paragraph of the inheritance-tax law of a State I shall not name, as it is not a solitary offender: ' . . . owing to . . . the further fact that large sums of money due the State as taxes are not being collected, and the fact that the revenue and school funds of this State are badly in need of additional revenue, creates an emergency and an imperative public necessity requiring the suspension of the constitutional rule that all bills be read in each House on three several days, and that this Act take effect and be in force from and after its passage; and it is so enacted.'

A still further tribute to the efficacy of the death tax as an unfailing source of revenue is another clause commonly found in our State inheritance-tax laws. It is usually headed 'Constitutionality.' I do not need to quote. In

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effect it says: 'If any part of this law is found to be unconstitutional the rest of the law will continue to function. We must keep the machine rolling and cannot stop for trifles such as punctures or blowouts.' It is all very well to keep the tax machine rolling. The expenses of governing the people never stop; but it is the very punctures which have occurred that have focused the eyes of the people upon the evils of taxation.

In estates of over $50,000, double taxation became common in 1916 when the Federal Estate Tax was enacted as an excise tax under the pressure of the World War. In the Revenue Act of 1916 the highest bracket was a ten-per-cent levy. In March 1917, this Act was amended and the entire tax slightly increased with the highest bracket fixed at 15 per cent. In October of the same year there was a further increase of the entire tax, and in the highest bracket 25 per cent was reached. Early in 1919 the lower brackets were slightly reduced, but in 1924, nearly six years after the World War had come to an end, Congress again tampered with what was originally a war measure by raising the entire tax, with the exception of the two lowest brackets. This Congress raised the highest bracket from 25 per cent to 40 per cent!

Thus, from 1916 on, we have had double taxation as a common occurrence in estates not covered by the $50,000 Federal exemption: that is, taxation by the Federal Government and taxation by the State of residence. With characteristically clear vision President Coolidge long ago recognized the mischief that was being worked by the high brackets of the Federal Estate Tax, as well as the vicious tendencies of this multiple tax. He has voiced his convictions, which are based upon the soundest of economic grounds, has told the people that it was clearly the business of the States to set their houses in order, and is himself bending every effort toward a reduction of the Estate Tax.

From an economic if not from a social standpoint, it seems hardly desirable that the Federal Estate Tax should be entirely abolished, because such abolishment would in effect establish certain States as almost perfect asylums for men of large means who desired to dodge all death taxes. Such a situation might not be wholesome and might to some extent handicap many States which do not care to go to the extreme of abolishing their inheritance taxes.

On the other hand, it is felt that a material reduction of the Federal Estate Tax is not only most desirable, but is wholly practical, for the reason that the total amount raised by the Estate Tax is so small a fraction of the total revenue raised by our Government that the reduction or abolishment of this tax would do little to disturb the balance of the Federal revenue system. Mr. David E. Finley states that in 1924 the Estate Tax contributed but 2½ per cent of the total revenue received by the Government from all sources.

Still another factor to make confusion worse confounded is the Gift Tax included in the Revenue Act of 1924. The purpose of this tax was to exact a Federal levy from the transfer of property that might escape the Estate Tax. In effect, the Revenue Act of 1924 is a double-barreled shotgun; one barrel is loaded for gifts from the living, the other for gifts from the dead, and both are always aimed at the capitalist.

In the Gift Tax we have a law the constitutionality of which may well be questioned. In application, the Gift Tax may easily conflict with the Income Tax, creating still another form of double taxation quite without reason

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or justification. It is generally understood that the Administration has small sympathy with the Gift Tax because it is so ill-grounded from both the legal and the economic standpoints. In the main it closely resembles the Estate Tax, both as to rates and exemptions.

Beyond question here is an evil that must be stamped out. Overlapping, conflicting, communistic, it is a law so unjust, so ill-conceived, as to invite repudiation by evasion. If our next Congress can read the handwriting so clearly on the wall, it will waste no time in abolishing the Gift Tax. It should be evident that much more of the wealth of our capitalists is needed in the channels of commerce and industry than is now available. Our legislators might recall with profit Abraham Lincoln's homely saying to the effect that honey is more persuasive than vinegar.

When Congress convenes in December we may expect to see the President's tax-reduction programme receiving early consideration. The Estate Tax is likely to be the subject of spirited debate. The States representing our greatest wealth may vote for the abolishment of this tax, using the double-taxation argument. Much of the South and probably the West may be solidly against this. The argument may be that the heavy surtaxes of the Federal Income Tax have driven the capitalist into a wholesale investment in tax-exempt municipals. On this basis the proponents of the Estate Tax may say that, inasmuch as the man of large affairs has successfully dodged heavy income-taxes during his lifetime, it is equitable to compensate the Federal Government by taking a portion of his estate at his death before it shall pass to his heirs.

Owing to the complexity of the State situation and the lively sense of the sovereignty of States' rights, there is little chance that a workable agreement will be made between the States and the Federal Government permitting the exclusive collection of death taxes by the Government and a subsequent apportionment between the States. There is still less likelihood that the States as a group will surrender to the Federal Government without condition this fertile field of taxation. Under these circumstances the most natural solution would be the reduction of the Federal Estate Tax to a point where it will not be an excessive burden.

For some nine years double taxation has been common. As a matter of loyalty to the home State and to the United States the tax to the State of residence and to the Federal Government is paid without overmuch grumbling. It is when the triple tax or the multiple tax, with all its injustice, appears that protests arise. This evil is bound to be wiped from the slate. It is too unsound, too unjust to endure. But it will not pass at once. Certain States will be slow to relinquish their claims. It will take time.

At the moment this article is being written, New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut have recently enacted, and Massachusetts has broadened, reciprocal-exemption legislation. Without using the strictly legal definition, I may perhaps crudely describe the reciprocal-exemption provision as follows. Massachusetts says in effect to New York: 'If you will agree not to tax a Massachusetts resident on the securities he owns representing New York corporations, I will reciprocate this courtesy by agreeing not to tax the heirs of a New York resident on coming into possession of securities representing his holdings in Massachusetts corporations.'

To illustrate: Jones, a resident of Massachusetts, dies leaving his wife,

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among other property, about $20,000 in stock of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, a New York corporation. Under the old laws this would have been subject to at least a double tax, by Massachusetts as the State of residence, and by New York as the State of incorporation — two taxes on the same block of stock. Under the reciprocal-exemption provision New York exempts this stock, as far as she is concerned, in favor of Massachusetts, or other States that extend reciprocal exemption under similar circumstances to her. This is a decided step in advance.

But while some States, such as Nevada, have gone to the extreme by abolishing death taxes, and while some others are talking about doing this, signs are not lacking that so simple and effective a measure for the removal of the overlapping-tax evil may meet discouraging entanglements in the Twilight Land of Taxation. I shall quote from a comparatively recent ruling of the Wisconsin Tax Commission a paragraph that clearly illustrates the logic of its position in opposing reciprocal exemption with New York: —

'It is scarcely a frank proposal to ask this or any Western State to exempt stocks of domestic corporations left by decedents of New York, in consideration for exemption by New York of stocks of corporations of that State left by resident decedents of this State. There are several important railroad corporations, as well as many other industrial corporations of this State, the stocks of which are held largely if not chiefly in New York City. But there are probably very few stocks of New York corporations held by residents of this State. Does it not seem like a one-sided proposition to suggest reciprocity under the existing conditions?'

The fog will not be dispelled by the reciprocal-exemption clause alone. Certain States may quite reasonably refuse to adopt it. We may have to look to other measures as well as this for the extermination of the overlapping tax.

To argue that the spread of the reciprocal-exemption privilege will be smooth and swift, and that the overlapping-tax evil will quickly disappear into the night, is to say to one's self: 'All is well. My family will not be burdened with the multiple tax because that will be abolished before I die.' No man knows when his time will come. You may be called to-morrow. The overlapping tax is with us to-day; we have no conclusive evidence that it will not be here to-morrow. To procrastinate putting one's estate in order is simply to invite that degree of confiscation which the present death-tax laws have legalized. Without action on your part your family faces the very certain possibility of having to settle a debt of unnecessary proportions.

In the *Atlantic* for September, I outlined four serious situations in the Twilight Land of Taxation. There is still another, affecting all estates large enough to be reached by the Estate Tax; and that is the double appraisal.

Aaron Smith dies leaving an estate of $200,000, which at this writing — excepting four jurisdictions — will be subject to death taxes by both his State of residence and the Federal Government. Before Smith's heirs can pay these taxes there must be a thorough appraisal of all Smith's possessions, as an appraisal is essential to the determination of the tax. Right here we have twilight, if not darkness. The State of residence makes an appraisal for the purpose of fixing the amount of the State tax. The Federal Government makes an independent appraisal to determine the Estate Tax. To a greater or less degree each ignores the

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other and goes its own way. The exception occurs when there are found in the estate certain valuable works of art or rare antiques, or something of a nature that requires the services of a highly skilled specialist to fix the value. In such a case an acknowledged expert in his line is engaged, and his report is quite generally given weight if not accepted in toto by both State and Federal appraisers. With this minor exception, Aaron Smith's family subject themselves to the annoyance of at least two appraisals.

Sometimes before the executor has completed his work the Federal authorities may find that there has been overpayment or underpayment of the tax. Another appraisal is at once necessary to check up on this point.

Without considering the feelings of the family at such a time, can we find any logical apology, any economic justification for such a needless duplication of work of a somewhat specialized nature? It is a glaring example of governmental inefficiency in a comparatively simple matter.

What is to prevent the Federal Government and the States from agreeing to appoint one appraiser for each State? Then let the State appraiser and the Federal appraiser between themselves choose a third disinterested member and there would be a board of three, which if wisely chosen should be able to function for both State and Federal Government and thus remove the burden of the double appraisal.

II

The facts must be faced. Send to your State capitol and ask for a pamphlet containing the inheritance-, succession-, or death-tax laws of your State of residence. Almost all the States have a booklet containing these laws and are glad to have their citizens acquaint themselves with them. Read the death-tax laws through, slowly. At times you may get lost in legal phraseology, but you will get the general drift and the gist of it.

Generally in the first few paragraphs you will find either a table or the percentages by which the tax is estimated. Where a printed table is not given, you can quickly make your own. Study to understand the exemptions. Know the exemption that your wife or husband may have, and what is allowed to children, parents, or other relatives you may wish to remember. A knowledge of these exemptions is of first importance in helping you to set your estate in order.

Most States have something quite definite to say on 'contemplation of death.' Several States say that if a gift is made within two years of death that gift shall be deemed to have been made in contemplation of death, and the burden of proof is thrown upon the recipient to show that the gift was *not* made in contemplation of death and is therefore nontaxable. Wisconsin seems to go to an extreme on this point in that she deems that a gift of a material part of an estate made within six years of death shall be construed as having been made in contemplation of death.

Many a State gives total exemption to gifts to charitable, religious, educational, or other institutions that are incorporated within the State and operated for the public good. But few are the States that exempt such gifts made to these institutions *without* the State of residence. Not long ago a generous Westerner died, leaving a large bequest to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. His State of residence taxed this gift in full, simply because it went without the State.

The *Indianapolis Star* is credited with the following significant news-

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item. 'Double tax may cut bequest to University. De Pauw University may receive not more than 57.6 per cent of the $2,300,000 bequests provided in the will of Edward Rector, prominent attorney of Chicago. The remaining 42.4 per cent will be assessed against the estate by the Illinois and Michigan taxing authorities. It is understood that the greater part of the estate comprised stock in the Burroughs Adding Machine Company, a Michigan corporation. If this is correct, then the inheritance tax will be duplicated in both States.'

Many States with provincial shortsightedness have gone to such lengths in order to keep the money within the State.

I can best picture the cash savings to the heirs through the judicious use of the gift method by citing actual figures. In one estate that came to me for analysis there was a possible saving of $30,500 on each of several blocks of $100,000 given away, and in this case the Gift Tax was included. In other words, by wisely giving this $100,000 the donor could save his family a tax amounting to $30,500.

Turning back to the booklet containing your State death taxes, there is another point that is important for you to ascertain. Find out how long a time your executor is allowed in which to pay the State tax. Know whether he must complete his work within six months, a year, or two years. See if your State offers a reward in the form of a five-per-cent discount for cash within six months. If there is a discount available, see to it that your executor has at least a fighting chance to win that discount for your family. Give him elbow-room, and cash to work with.

If any of your property, either cash in banks, securities, or real estate, is held jointly by you and your wife, glance again through the laws and see what your State says about joint estates. It may not say exactly what you thought it would. It is well to know on what basis your wife may be taxed on a joint estate.

The next time you go to your bank step into the safety-deposit vault and see the manager of that department. Ask him to show you a box bearing the death seal. Find out about how long a time elapses before the death seal is broken so that the box may be opened by the executor or administrator. Consider for a moment what would happen if that seal were now upon your box; would your wife be seriously inconvenienced by not having access to certain documents in that box — life-insurance policies, for instance?

In many cases life insurance is the quickest, surest means that the husband has provided for supplying his wife with ready cash for immediate needs. Life-insurance policies need not and should not be left in such a way as to fall under the death seal.

Real estate is taxed by the State of its location. Thus, if you have large holdings in other States, it may be advisable to glance at the death taxes of the States involved and acquaint yourself in a general way with the treatment that they accord to the nonresident. It goes without saying that, in estates large enough to come under the Federal Estate Tax, real estate, like other forms of property, may become subject to the double tax.

III

Perhaps the most interesting phase of the situation is reached when we come to the subject of investments such as stocks, bonds, mortgages, notes, and so forth, because quite often desirability from the investment standpoint is diametrically opposed to desirability

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from the inheritance standpoint. All the securities of the United States Steel Corporation are popular with investors. We have here, however, a New Jersey Corporation. At this writing, if the stock of this company is owned in considerable blocks by a resident of any other State, and if the estate is large enough to come under the Federal Estate Tax, triple taxation is likely to attach itself to this stock.

United Shoe Machinery, Studebaker, United Fruit, American Smelting, American Can, and scores of other prominent stocks desirable either from the speculative or from the investment standpoint, and sometimes desirable from both, are at once questionable, often objectionable, from the death-tax standpoint. Years of investment experience have driven home the importance of giving most careful consideration to the investment standing of securities, because in this may lie the strength or vulnerability of the entire estate.

It does not take a very high order of intelligence to say, 'Sell everything in this list of States and reinvest in this list of States.' Fortunately the thoughtful investor invariably balks when such a prescription is handed out. He finds, perhaps, that his choicest stocks are banned, or that he must sell practically everything and reinvest in securities with which he is totally unfamiliar.

A rather striking example of the conflict between the investment standpoint and the inheritance standpoint came to my attention some months ago. This was the estate of a woman keenly interested in death taxes in behalf of two daughters. Here I found a most interesting situation. Over half of her estate was subject to the triple tax under existing conditions, and in this same half lay the choicest securities of her entire estate. These were securities that a woman ought to hold. There was no reasonable justification for me to advise this woman to throw these securities overboard if I could work out a plan which would reduce or compensate for the triple tax without disturbing the gilt-edged securities. This I was fortunately able to do.

I do not believe that ten per cent of our investors know in dollars the approximate amount that their families must pay in death taxes, probably within a year of their death. I attribute this inaction, amazing to one in possession of the facts, to four major reasons.

First, there is a widespread belief that putting one's estate in order must mean a wholesale upsetting of a man's investment programme. I have already stated that the sacrifice of choice investments is not always essential. Quite generally it can be avoided.

Secondly, there is much unsound optimism. A feeling that death taxes will soon pass is ill-grounded. Inheritance taxes have existed since about 600 B.C. They are such a supremely effective means for supporting State government that there is small likelihood of their being totally abolished.

Thirdly, there is the inevitable procrastination. Many investors intend to have their estates put in order and their taxes determined. They put it off till to-morrow because it is such an easy thing to postpone. They may not know where to turn for service of so specialized a nature. Just as neglecting to make a will may result in an unfortunate division of property, neglect to determine death taxes is likely to saddle a family with certain totally unnecessary expenses.

And finally, there is selfishness. Sometimes a man takes the attitude that, since he will not have to pay his own death taxes, he will let someone else worry about them. He ignores the

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fact that the analysis of the specialist will quite generally supply plans that will enable him to increase the value of the estate he may leave. To the credit of the investor let me add that I believe that this reason is rarely predominant.

It has been my experience that if an investor is fairly in possession of the facts, if he knows that these taxes are a reality and not a will-o'-the-wisp, if he sees that by a small expenditure he can in all probability leave his family a few hundreds or perhaps thousands of dollars more than he could by doing nothing, and if he understands that the putting of his estate in order need not have volcanic effects upon his investments, he is ready at once to have this work done. He knows that it is an unselfish task; he sees just how the family will benefit.

IV

Turning back to the subject of unsound optimism for a moment, let us examine the facts. Let us first assume that some men having modest estates believe they will leave so little that death taxes and expenses will be too insignificant an item to consider at this time. Is their position well taken?

In personally examining actual court records of estates I find facts that are surprising though entirely logical. In a group of small estates I find that it is not extraordinary for death taxes, administration expenses, and debts to consume from 10 to over 15 per cent of the estate. In justice to death taxes it should be said that the above shrinkage must not be laid wholly at the door of the tax-collector. Without doubt certain of these estates were in bad order, but aside from this, debts and other death expenses must have been excessive in proportion to the size of the estate.

In estates of people in comfortable circumstances I find that the shrinkage commonly runs between 7 and 10 per cent. Of course the man of large affairs who counts his property value by the millions experiences a materially larger shrinkage than this because the higher brackets of the Federal Estate Tax make large and rapid inroads into his accumulations.

To say that the capitalist suffers the most from death taxes and charges is not strictly true. He does suffer the most in dollars and cents, but the small estate may and often does experience a greater percentage of shrinkage, and here you find that the percentage hurts. A ten-per-cent depletion in an estate of $10,000 may be a grave matter.

For the man of comfortable or of modest means to take the ground that the situation in the Twilight Land of Taxation is such as to justify a do-nothing attitude as regards his own affairs is to run the risk of handicapping his immediate family or heirs to an extent that would never be countenanced by the financier. The latter quite naturally is accustomed to giving a considerable portion of his time and thought to the care and accumulation of his estate. He is in close touch with tax specialists in every field. He has made it his business to get these tax facts and figures beforehand, and he has prepared his estate to meet these debts well within the time limits imposed. He has seen to it that no needless multiple tax has been overlooked and that his heirs will receive the legal maximum of his estate.

The financier roughly pictures his estate as a huge uncut pie. At his death he knows that two large slices, perhaps several more, must be cut and served before his family may enjoy a morsel. His State of residence and the Federal Government will each take generous slices. Other States may follow suit

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before it is the family's turn to be served, and administration expenses will consume a further portion. A very material part of the pie will be gone before the family is called to the table. Is there no way by which he can compensate for this shrinkage, or must his family remain the poorer by the amount of these taxes?

It all depends upon the man — whether he is in good physical condition, and whether he wants to arrange for the payment of these debts in advance.

As the situation in the Twilight Land of Taxation has grown more jumbled and befogged, the practice of making partial payments and of creating something in the nature of a sinking fund to take care of all death debts has become more and more prevalent. This is something that the utterly selfish man will not do. It is nothing more or less than arranging to pay these debts — which will be his family's, not his own — on what I may roughly term an installment basis, figured upon the number of years the man may be expected to live. If he is not in good physical condition he must make his deposits at a premium, or he may perhaps be totally debarred from this opportunity to recompense his family for the debts that they must meet.

He must be in good physical condition because this funding of all death charges can be accomplished by just one means, and that is life insurance, taken out for this specific purpose. One of the material factors in the extraordinary progress of the life-insurance business in the past few years has been the awakening of our investors to the fact that this is the only way in which a family can be compensated for the debts that death incurs. To use a mechanical term, life insurance used in this connection is automatic. The event that incurs these many debts of itself makes the insurance policy a claim and provides for their prompt discharge.

Excepting five States (which tax under certain conditions), life insurance to a named beneficiary is totally exempt up to $40,000. Above this figure the Federal Estate Tax comes into effect. Thus, outside of five States, life insurance amounting to $40,000 or less offers the means of securing an estate exempt from death taxes. Life insurance amounting to more than $50,000 offers the means of providing a family with the only estate that will be subject to but one death tax, that being the Estate Tax. At this writing an estate of over $50,000, other than life insurance, becomes generally subject to taxation by both the Federal Government and the State of residence. The present exceptions to this general rule are the four jurisdictions having no legacy taxes.

There is one, and to my knowledge only one, estate that is 100 per cent exempt from all death taxes, no matter how large the estate; yet, strange to say, it is comparatively little known. This estate can be provided wherever the wife has independent means to which the husband has not contributed. The wife, with her own independent means, insures her husband's life, naming herself as beneficiary. The amount of the insurance is limited only by her financial ability to make the necessary deposits. At her husband's death the proceeds of such insurance become hers, absolutely tax-free, for this reason: death taxes are a tax upon the right to receive, a tax upon the transfer of property; in this case there is no transfer, for the wife is merely receiving her own property back again, and hence no death tax is possible.

Only a few days ago a chronic invalid in fair financial circumstances asked me this question: 'Is n't there

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some way by which I can provide for my death taxes so that my estate will not be depleted?' I had to say 'No.' I told him that cash, Liberty bonds, and municipals were his best means of providing for the taxes, and that because of his physical condition no means was available to him to compensate his family for those certain debts. Here is a case where the man has looked ahead, desires to pay these debts for his family, and is financially able to do so, but is physically disqualified.

An interesting example of the value of life insurance in reducing death taxes came to light as I was studying probate records. In an estate of less than $60,000 I was puzzled to account for so small a legacy tax as $169. I turned to the inventory and found the answer. A life-insurance policy for $20,000 was, of course, tax-exempt in Massachusetts. This left an estate of about $39,000, which, with a wise wording of the will, left a comparatively small balance taxable.

It is not the purpose of this article to overdraw the picture and paint the situation in the Twilight Land of Taxation in untrue colors. It is not the total foreign and multiple taxes which a badly ordered estate must pay that is a serious problem — it is the principle that is wrong. Apart from the expense of the multiple taxes, the executor must bear with the annoyance and delay caused by these minor items. Several Western States require local administration in settling the estates of non-residents. Too often the local administrator's fee is far out of proportion to the value of the service rendered.

A simple way in which to save your family the expense and delay of a seemingly small detail is to have as many copies of your will drawn off as there are States in which your property is involved. They may be needed.

While the overlapping of tax on tax as between States may some day pass, that day is yet to come. There seems to be less likelihood that the double tax between the majority of our States and the Federal Government will immediately disappear, although we may reasonably hope that the rate of taxation will soon be materially reduced. Under such circumstances it becomes a matter of common prudence to acquaint one's self with the facts concerning one's estate and to make immediate provision so that the family may not be put to the extremity of forced sales of property in order to secure the cash that the taxes and the usual death-expenses will require.

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COAL FOR THE PEOPLE

BY ARTHUR E. SUFFERN

I

In ten counties of Eastern Pennsylvania, 162,503 miners have laid down their tools and stopped mining anthracite coal because they have failed to come to terms with their employers. They refuse to work unless they can obtain an acceptable contract. In that respect they take the same position as any individual who seeks to obtain the best wages and working-conditions possible. The majority of these men are employed by ten large coal companies which produce about 74 per cent of the anthracite coal and own about 90 per cent of the reserve coal lands. These companies are known as 'railroad' companies because they are or have been owned by the railroads penetrating the anthracite coal fields. The so-called 'independent' coal companies produce the remaining 26 per cent of anthracite coal, one half of which is mined by nine of these independents. Thus the failure of nineteen coal companies and a union representing over 160,000 anthracite miners to come to an agreement upon wages, hours, and working-conditions faces millions of people with the prospect of a shortage of fuel, inadequate heating-facilities, and high prices.

Chronic undersupply of anthracite coal for the last ten years makes this situation all the more formidable. In contrast to the effects of a strike in the bituminous industry, the loss of production of anthracite cannot be quickly made up. It is estimated that the bituminous mines in operation at present could produce about 400,000,000 tons more than our yearly demand. Whether anthracite colliery capacity is made inadequate because of physical limitations upon production, exhaustion of the most accessible deposits, decrease in labor supply, or because of the deliberate policy of the coal companies, is a matter of controversy. All of these factors may bear upon the situation, but one thing is certain — actual production is below estimated capacity. Production reached its peak in 1918, when the mines operated 293 days. Since the war the mines have been running about 270 days out of a 308-working-day year, except as the mines have been closed by strikes.

In so far as chronic undersupply may be explained by a shortage of labor, it appears to be an undersupply of miners' laborers, who were formerly recruited extensively from the ranks of European immigrants. The United States Coal Commission reported that the present limitation of mining capacity cannot be attributed to the lack of skilled miners growing out of the Pennsylvania requirement of certification of miners. The Commission concluded that an undersupply of unskilled laborers is not a limitation on capacity over which the operators have no control. Other industries have increased their working forces since the war, and 'it therefore appears that earnings and conditions of labor offered by the anthracite

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industry, viewed in the aggregate, have not attracted labor in the same degree as have the wages and conditions offered by other industries.'

In every controversy there are two sides to be heard. Both sides have a story to tell and a cause to defend. The people who want an uninterrupted supply of coal should not be an uninterested public. One-sided condemnations of either the miners or the operators will not control the conditions that cause strikes. What follows is an attempt to let each side state its case in its own terms.

II

From the standpoint of the miners, the controversy centres around (1) an increase in wages, (2) better working-conditions, (3) full recognition of the union, and (4) better living-conditions. Nothing startling is revealed by this classification, but the first two of these items increase the cost of production, which is guarded zealously by the operators. The demand for full recognition of the union is the result of a long-standing controversy, while the request for better living-conditions is understandable by everybody.

The miners demand a ten-per-cent increase for contract miners (piece-workers) and one dollar per day for those employed by the day. How much this demand would actually increase the labor cost per ton of coal can only be a guess, because nobody knows how many days per year the mines will work or just how many tons will be produced. The miners are more concerned about the yearly wages they make and the standard of living they can enjoy than they are about labor cost.

The most recent authoritative figures on wages in the coal industry were collected by the United States Coal Commission for the year 1921. According to these figures for the anthracite industry, 20 per cent of the contract miners (pieceworkers) who drew wages in the same mine on every pay-roll throughout the year earned more than $2400, and 10 per cent more than $2700. But 20 per cent earned less than $1700, and 10 per cent less than $1500. The average expressed as the earnings of the 'median full-year contract miner' was $2000. These were the earnings of the highest-paid occupational group, and they do not include those who obtained part-time work by shifting from mine to mine. The average number of days on which the mines hoisted coal was 271.

Contract miners' laborers, inside day-men, and outside day-men are also classed as major occupational groups. Of those who drew wages in the same mine on every pay-roll throughout the year, over 63 per cent of the first group, over 52 per cent of the second group, and over 53 per cent of the third group earned less than $1500. Of these groups those earning more than $2700 were mere fractions of one per cent. The median earnings for these groups were $500 or $600 lower than for contract miners.

In order to approximate more closely what the anthracite workers are now earning, it is necessary to add the ten-per-cent increase received in their last contract of 1923. But it must be kept in mind that these figures of earnings are not actual rates and that they will vary according to the number of days worked, according to the differences in wage-rates paid for each occupation, and according to the differences in working-conditions in each mine and each district. Furthermore, they do not represent the wage situation as affected by part-time work because of labor turnover. The above figures apply simply to two thirds of all

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contract miners and inside day-men, to three fourths of all outside day-men, and to one third of the miners' laborers. Therefore the use of these figures to characterize anthracite wages presents the most favorable aspect of the wage situation.

In the mind of the miners this constant conflict over wages is caused by the claims of the investors accelerating at an intolerable rate as against the claims of the employees and the public. These investors' claims take the form of charges for depletion, interest, royalties, and profits. The miners pointed out to the Coal Commission, to which was delegated the task of investigating the causes of strikes, that they had been taught by 'bitter experience that the main cause is the ever-accelerating claim of the holders of anthracite securities. For every increase in national demand for coal, for every increase in technology and productivity, the investor demands the full increment, keeping prices at the maximum which the traffic will bear, and wages at the minimum upon which the miners can be made to exist. There is no solution for the economic problem of anthracite until this intolerable grip is relaxed; until the public-service function of the industry is frankly recognized; and until the claims of investors are confined to reasonable limits, the standard of living of the miners permitted to grow with the productive expansion of the industry, and the price to the consumer adjusted to these two factors.'

Whether or not one agrees with the miners, this is a statement in no uncertain terms of an issue that affects the present and the long-time adjustment of wages.

The employers resist the demands of the miners for wages, hours, and working-conditions that will increase the cost of production of coal. They claim the miners enjoy higher annual earnings than any other workers of whom they have found record. They want the miners to make a long-term agreement 'with provision for the adjustment of wage-rates during that term so that wages may be conformed to changing economic conditions.' No elaboration is made of this principle of adjustment that would indicate whether or not wages would be changed merely in connection with changes in the cost of living. Nor is there any mention of the way the principle would bear upon the adjustment of working-conditions that largely determine the miner's opportunity to work and earn.

But, aside from the question as to whether or not the miners should receive the increase which they have demanded, there are many other factors that affect their earnings. These they have included in their demands in a form that has meaning mostly for the operators and for those who may happen to be familiar with mining conditions.

They demand uniformity in day-rates, and the carrying-out of the task of equalization of rates that was delegated to the Anthracite Board of Conciliation by the last contract. This diversity of rates is an inheritance from the days of individual bargaining, which was crystallized into the form of a precedent by the award of the Anthracite Coal Commission in 1903. The demand involves more nearly equal pay for equal work.

They demand that when piece-workers are put in abnormal working-places, in which it is impossible to make the usual wage, the miner shall be paid the average of his customary earnings. This shifts the cost of producing coal in abnormal places to the operator, to whom it belongs. The payment of a uniform rate per ton to the piece-worker, regardless of adverse mining-

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conditions, puts the burden on the miner.

The miners request that they be paid twenty cents per inch for the removal of refuse ten feet in width, and thirty cents per inch for blasting top and bottom rock. The issue here, again, is whether the miner can make his usual wage at the rates agreed upon.

The law of Pennsylvania provides that the contract miners shall be paid according to the weight of the coal which they send out, rather than according to a rate per car, which may vary in capacity. But it also permits the operators and miners to agree to some other form of payment than according to weight. This is the joker in the law that has always left the advantage with the operators. If the operators insisted on payment by the car as a condition of giving employment, the acceptance of that mode of payment constituted an agreement. Payment by the car permits the operators to increase the capacity of the car and to compel the miners to do more work for the same rate. For these reasons the miners demand that the wage-rate shall be based on a ton of 2240 pounds.

The miners also insist on the abolition of unreasonable penalties and dockage for impurities that may have been loaded with the coal. They demand that the penalties and the amounts docked shall be a matter of agreement between the local mine committee and the management.

The practice in most modern industries is to furnish the workers with the supplies, equipment, and tools that are needed to perform their tasks. The list of these things for which the miners demand payment indicates that the anthracite industry is far behind other industries.

When the miners are asked to work overtime they demand time and one half, and double time for Sundays and holidays. A desire to furnish the operators with an economic incentive to reduce overtime and to obtain more time for leisure and home life lies behind this demand.

The miners claim that in the last two years 1000 men have been killed and 40,000 have been injured in the anthracite collieries. On the grounds of hazard they demand an increase in wages that will enable them to leave their dependents better protected.

In response to the demands of the miners for improvement in working-conditions, the operators consider such demands primarily to discover whether they increase the cost of production. As yet the operators have published nothing that indicates in detail whether they are prepared to concede any of these demands. The degree to which improvement in working-conditions makes for better industrial relations and greater productivity is relatively an unexplored field.

Closely related to the rates received per ton or per day is the opportunity to work and to earn. When contract miners, through no fault of their own, are not permitted to work in their regular working-places, they demand that they be given work by the day. When the mine works, they expect the management to readjust its working force.

When men are laid off, those longest on the working force expect to retain their jobs; when rehiring begins, the oldest in point of service expect to be called upon first. This is the gist of the demand for seniority rights.

If a company has several collieries, the men expect that an equal division of work should be made between collieries, instead of closing down some and keeping others on full time. They believe this should be done regardless of the increase in the cost of production from part-time operation.

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Finally, they demand a five-day week, seemingly on the theory that enough coal can be produced in that time and that it will be conducive to greater regularity of production.

The adjustment of these demands for the improvement of the opportunity to work and earn would not only be affected by the methods that the management employs in each mine, but it would also be influenced by the general regularity or irregularity of the operation of the mines. In both cases the effect on the cost of production would play a large part in the adjustments. Better methods of management and greater regularity of operation usually reduce the cost of production. But the demands for a more equal division of work between the collieries of any one company and for a five-day work-week might easily increase the cost of production under some circumstances. The operators have not answered these demands in detail. In the adjustment of such important demands, the need is apparent for more thoroughgoing co-operation between the operators and the miners in order to arrive at a more reasonable solution than would result from the arbitrary action of either party.

The operators want the miners to agree to continue work during further negotiations whenever they fail to reach an agreement before the expiration of the contract. In case further negotiations do not result in an agreement, the operators desire the miners to submit disputed points to arbitration. But the experience of the past has undermined the confidence of the miners in regard to the impartiality of 'disinterested public representatives,' and they believe that an agreement in advance to arbitrate cuts off the possibility of reasonable adjustment in joint conference. Furthermore, their president said, 'when the man who toils in your collieries agrees to let some tribunal or third agency say what his conditions of employment shall be, what hours of labor he must work, and what compensation must be given, then he gives to that agency or that tribunal or that arbitration commission the power to determine the character of the house in which he shall live, the kind of food he shall eat, the degree of education his children shall receive, and to determine his standard and his status as a citizen. . . . I do not know anyone except the man who works with his hands who is asked to arbitrate those fundamentals.'

Neither the professions nor 'the trades or industry on the side of capital . . . yield to some creative agency the right to determine for them what their (service or) products may be worth in the market of the world.'

The operators believe that an agreement in advance to arbitrate disputed points leads both parties to try to reach a direct agreement 'rather than incur the burdens, uncertainties, and vexations of arbitration.' Furthermore, they contend that such an agreement furnishes incentive to both sides to moderate and compromise their demands rather than attempt to maintain unreasonable positions. Arbitration becomes a 'spectre in the background which all desire to avoid.' In the opinion of the operators, they can take no more conciliatory attitude than to agree to let 'representatives of the public fix the wages they shall pay,' if they fail to reach an agreement with their employees.

The operators look upon the strike as 'a legitimate weapon to drive an economic bargain with a selfish employer,' but they claim that 'there is no moral right, or social justification, to organize strikes or lockouts in basic industries or transportation where (when?) disinterested agencies for adjustment and

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adjudication are available.' Since the anthracite operators recognize and deal collectively with the union, they feel that 'no group of workers in the United States is better protected against tyranny, injustice, and oppression than the anthracite workers.' This being the case, they arrive at the conclusion that general strikes in the industry are open contests between 'organized industry and organized society.' No comparison is drawn between the right of the operators to refuse to produce coal except at a profit and the right of the miners to refuse to work except for a wage which supports or betters their standard of living. But the logic of compulsory arbitration cuts both ways and would affect the rights of both parties to produce or not to produce.

The miners ask for 'full recognition' of their union. Since the operators were compelled by the award of the Anthracite Coal Commission of 1920 to abandon the fiction of dealing only with the representatives of their employees, the request for 'full recognition' is evidently for the purpose of establishing the 'check-off,'[1] or deduction of union dues from the miners' pay-envelopes, which the United Mine Workers practise in the bituminous industry. The miners claim that to grant their request would not be any great expense to the operators. They list twenty-nine items that the operators deduct from the miners' pay. These items range from supplies and equipment that the miner uses in connection with his work to subscriptions for Liberty bonds, Red Cross, and various charitable and community projects.

To disabuse the minds of the operators of any fear that they will be increasing the power of the union or of any dislike of building up what they conceive to be a more effective opposition, the miners call the attention of the operators to the fact that they have already acquired sufficient membership, without the aid of the check-off, to control the labor situation in the industry. Thus the miners would leave the operators to infer that the agreement to the check-off would be a mere minor concession, which the operators can easily grant in spite of their fears and prejudices of the past.

The miners point to the fact that their members are no different from business and professional men who belong to first-class clubs and who neglect to pay their dues. But the organization has about a half-million members to deal with, and it is subjected to considerable administrative expense in collecting dues. Therefore the miners appeal to the operators to grant their request on the grounds of encouraging greater administrative efficiency of the union, the need for which the operators have stressed much in the past.

The attitude of the operators toward the check-off may be summed up by their statement that no union should be relieved of the 'burden of collecting its own dues for its own war chest.'

Finally, the miners request that the operators give more attention to repairs, rebuilding, and the erection of houses in the anthracite-mining towns. To this request the operators have as yet made no reply.

III

The question naturally arises: How has it come about that the miners and operators have reached this impasse in their relations? Such a question is particularly pertinent considering that a system of collective bargaining has been evolved for dealing with just such

[1] Because this article offers no opportunity for setting forth contrary opinions concerning the check-off, the reader must not infer that they are either few or unreasonable. — THE EDITORS

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crises. However, to understand these crises it is essential to know how existing attitudes have developed, as well as to be familiar with the conditions out of which organization arose for adjusting wages, hours, and conditions of labor. The merits of the controversy can be appreciated better in the light of such an understanding.

The miners made two attempts, one in the middle seventies and the other in the latter eighties, to establish a union for the betterment of wages, hours, and working-conditions. In both cases their efforts were defeated. As a result, until 1902 the operators were free to make the best bargains they could with their employees individually. They took advantage of their opportunity to such extent that abuses in the exercise of their power became a matter of outstanding complaint.

It was during this period that the ownership of coal lands was consolidated; that trusts for the control of the production and the sale of coal were formed; that the railroads extended their ownership of coal companies; that discrimination in freight rates between railroad coal companies and independent coal companies helped to eliminate the independent companies; and that the banking interests gave assistance in developing consolidation and control of the anthracite resources. All of these developments played a large part in making it possible for the operators to abuse their power. Such an alignment of business interests was simply too powerful for a disorganized lot of workmen largely made up of twenty-two nationalities of immigrants.

When the United Mine Workers were successful finally in organizing and calling the anthracite miners on strike in 1902, the operators had 'nothing to arbitrate' — an attitude which is now expressed by the miners. But the award of the Anthracite Coal Commission appointed in 1902 to settle the controversy was chiefly devoted to the elimination of abuses that had grown up under the régime of individual bargaining. The Commission raised the wage-rates, but refused to award recognition to the union. It recommended that the operators deal with representatives of their employees in making collective agreements.

Though the union was sufficiently entrenched so that dealing with representatives of their employees amounted to dealing with representatives of the union, the operators maintained the fiction of dealing only with representatives of their employees until they were compelled to recognize the union by the award of the Anthracite Coal Commission of 1920. Thus the union, for the most part, has had to devote itself to defensive and protective measures to maintain its status. The attitudes that result from such a struggle are not conducive to leniency when the union is strong enough to refuse with impunity an offer to arbitrate.

The award of the Anthracite Coal Commission of 1902 provided for the formation of a Board of Conciliation, composed of an equal number of representatives of both sides, to adjust disputes that might arise during the period of the award. Provision was also made for the selection of an umpire by whom cases should be decided when the board failed to agree. But no organization was set up for making collective agreements when the award lapsed. The Commission simply recommended that the operators deal with their employees collectively.

When the award terminated in 1906, the operators took the position that the award was an adjustment of wages, hours, and working-conditions that needed no elaboration by further negotiations. The award was renewed for

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another three-year period. In 1909, except for a few minor concessions, the operators maintained the same position they had assumed in 1906, and the award was renewed for another three-year period. By 1912, however, the union had attained a strength that compelled the operators to enter into a joint conference and thoroughly discuss the grievances complained of. As a result the miners obtained a ten-per-cent increase in wages and significant concessions affecting working-conditions. However, the miners agreed to a four-year contract, carrying them to 1916.

By 1916 the effects of the European War began to be felt in this country. Conditions were favorable to obtain another increase in wages and further concessions bettering working-arrangements. However, the miners unwisely agreed to another four-year contract in the face of a situation that gave every promise of a rise in prices and the need for higher wages to meet an increasing cost of living. As a result, by the spring of 1917 they found themselves in the position of begging for a supplementary agreement to increase wages. This practice was reverted to again with success during the autumn of 1917, on November 15, 1918, and on September 29, 1919.

When the agreement terminated on March 31, 1920, conditions had developed that made the miners chary of entering into a long-time commitment. Prices were still rising, and the anthracite miners desired an increase in wages equal to what had been obtained in the bituminous industry as the result of negotiation and the award of the United States Bituminous Coal Commission on March 10, 1920. The negotiations were prolonged, and the imminence of a disagreement and a strike furnished occasion for the President of the United States to insist that the difference of the parties should be submitted to a commission similar to the one appointed for the bituminous industry. The miners believed that the award of the Anthracite Commission gave them 10 per cent less than they should have had and denied them many improvements in working-conditions. But they accepted it and worked under it until March 31, 1922. The feeling that they were granted less than was due them on this occasion is largely responsible for their attitude toward arbitration in the present crisis and for their loss of confidence in the impartiality of 'public representatives.'

The agreements in both the anthracite and the bituminous fields expired on March 31, 1922. A failure to reach an agreement before the expiration of the contracts resulted in a strike in the entire coal industry except for a few nonunion fields in the bituminous industry. This was the first occasion upon which such unanimity of action had been taken in a basic industry in this country. The strike was a protest against a reduction in wages, and the miners won it. In both the anthracite and the bituminous industries agreements at existing wage-rates were made for only one year.

Failure to reach an agreement in the anthracite field before the expiration of the contract on August 31, 1923, resulted in a suspension of work. As a result of the action of the Governor of the State of Pennsylvania in bringing about a settlement, the miners obtained the ten-per-cent increase they felt they had been wrongfully denied in 1920, and entered upon a contract running until August 31, 1925.

IV

The background of the present crisis largely explains why both parties maintain the attitudes they do and why they jockey for position in arriving

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at a settlement. Each side wants to convince the public of the justice of its case. The operators represent themselves as protectors of the consumer's purse and refuse to yield concessions which increase the cost of production. Public protest against a further increase in prices is met by the claim that it is necessary to transfer wage-increases to the consumers instead of decreasing profits and royalties. If they are unable to accomplish these ends by negotiations and publicity, the operators wish public authority to step in and place its sanction on whatever settlement is made. If a wage-increase is denied the miners, they place themselves in the position of running counter to public authority if they continue to strike. Besides, the public will regard them as poor sports for not accepting the decision. If a wage-increase is granted, then the consumers should not complain at an increase in prices; otherwise they are poor sports too. Whichever way you will, either the miners or the consumers are bound to lose by the decision.

The miners claim that their wage-rates multiplied by the number of days they have opportunity to work do not yield annual earnings commensurate with the effort they put forth and the hazard to which they are subjected. They are not satisfied with what their wages will buy or with the conditions under which they work and live. They prefer to reach an adjustment of these matters by negotiations rather than by the decree of a commission. They believe they should not be the only class whose income is determined by compulsion. The only economic power they have by which to accomplish their aims is a united refusal to work. They believe they have as good a right to refuse to work except at satisfactory wages as the operators have to refuse to produce coal except at a profit.

However, the placing of mere abstract rights in opposition will not solve the problem of equity in wages, profits, and prices to the consumer. Nor will it curb the abuse of power that may be practised by the miners, the operators, or the public. The more the strike is prolonged, the less likely is the prospect that an equitable adjustment will be made, because pressing conditions will probably bring a forced settlement.

The prolongation of the anthracite strike may also be complicated by conditions that may arise in the bituminous industry. The bituminous miners claim that the union operators are breaking the existing agreement, which runs until 1927. The bituminous operators say they cannot produce coal in competition with the nonunion fields and still pay the present union wage-scale. This complaint has been made for decades; the percentage of nonunion coal has steadily increased; and the union has been unable to organize the nonunion fields sufficiently to deprive the nonunion operators of the advantages they enjoy by enforcing individual bargaining with their employees. The nonunion operators have obtained injunctions that keep the union from organizing the nonunion miners, and the nonunion miners are compelled, as a condition of obtaining employment, to sign agreements that they will not join the union while in the employment of nonunion operators.

There are rumors of the calling of a general strike in the bituminous industry because the union operators are breaking the existing agreement. The miners are urging the nonunion miners in West Virginia to strike and join the union. A strike in the nonunion fields might or might not make the union operators more willing to stand by their agreement and thus prevent a general strike in the bituminous industry. If a general strike develops in the bituminous

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industry, there will soon be a shortage of coal, and the miners will be in a better position to dictate terms to both the anthracite and the bituminous operators.

In both fields the joint conference may be utilized to arrive at a settlement, if the parties concerned are willing to use existing machinery. But the probabilities are that they will be unwilling to enter upon a close scrutiny of factual data which will indicate the way to an equitable adjustment. The side having an advantage will make full use of it. Furthermore, the joint conference in the bituminous industry cannot make an agreement for the nonunion fields. This leaves the nonunion fields free to undercut whatever scale of wages is made in the union districts. Therefore, unless the union cannot stand the strain of prolonging the strike, the operators in the union fields of the bituminous industry and the anthracite operators are likely to want a settlement by a commission or commissions which can be applied to the whole of their respective industries and which, if an increase in wages is granted, will enable them to shift the cost to the consumers. Furthermore, such a settlement will leave the miners and operators at the termination of the award no better off than they are now. They will still face the problem of maintaining industrial peace by mere haggling and without the aid of dependable data.

Whether a settlement is made in joint conference or by a commission, comprehensive data on costs, prices, and profits is a prime need for the coal industry. Otherwise there is no basis of arriving at equity between the miners, the operators, and the consumers. Such data need to be collected from year to year by the Government under conditions that will make the data dependable. They can then be used with authority by the miners and operators in joint conference in arriving at voluntary agreements or by commissions in arbitration proceedings. If the operators and miners desire to settle their affairs without the aid of the Government, they stand in the best position to do so when all the cards are on the table.

To deal with the present crisis and to establish more constructive industrial relations for the future requires a new order of statesmanship. If the leaders on both sides have the statesmanship to introduce a coöperation between the management and the union, similar to that which is in operation on certain railroads with the railroad shop-crafts, the first requisite for that end will be reliable data from year to year on actual conditions in the coal industry.

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IN THE DJEBEL DRUZ

BY WOLFGANG VON WEISL

I

THE whole story of the Druze rebellion against the French in Syria has never been told in the press, and for good reasons, since no European or American journalist ever undertook the difficult and hazardous journey through the desert to the headquarters of the rebels in the Djebel. The information in the French press was scanty and unreliable: the French authorities ordered the strictest censorship in Syria, and not a word was allowed to be reported except communications which bore the imprimatur of General Sarrail's secretariat. No one can doubt that the French Administration in Syria was doing its best to make the world, and in particular the French people, believe that nothing was wrong in that quarter and that, except for a localized rebellion of a few Arab chieftains, order was being perfectly maintained. The representatives of the English press in Palestine had to depend on reports coming from Arabic sources, and these, representing every move made by the Druze forces as a great victory, gave quite as one-sided a picture as the French news.

All this moved me to proceed from Jerusalem to the heart of the Druze country, and observe the situation there with my own eyes. Such a journey is not without its trials, though it must not be imagined worse than it actually is; for, real as are the dangers from bandits and semisavage insurgents, there is no danger of death so long as one refrains from carrying firearms — with firearms upon him, a white man could be certain of being murdered. But under the circumstances I could not take the easiest route. To avoid the suspicion of the rebels, I had to penetrate into their country from some other direction than that of the French frontier. The French posts placed along the Syro-Palestine frontier as far north as Bosra and Deraa prescribed for me the best route to the Djebel Druz. From the east or southeast across the wild and unmastered Harrah Desert, a natural barrier of the mountainous land, the Djebel resembles an angry sea of stones, allowing only in a few places a little room for camels to pass; at any other point, passage by a vehicle would be absolutely impossible. The area was a *terra nuova* to me, and my maps were entirely inadequate. I lost myself in a formidable labyrinth surrounded by lava, and was misled by mirages at least ten times.

Only after a great many attempts, when I gave up all hope of getting across the Harrah, did my driver succeed in driving the car at a speed of five kilometres an hour through the volcano peaks, while I cleared away with my own hands the bulky volcanic rocks which were strewn in the path. At length we had the good fortune to find in the path to Bekkah the tracks of a Transjordanian automobile which apparently had crossed the same route a few days before. The way through the open, into the land of the Druze, was

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now in sight. Through Christian villages in the Djebel, my automobile finally rattled into Bekkah.

This territory has been occupied by the Druzes ever since the Christian massacres in the Lebanon in 1860. The all-powerful Atrash family, under the leadership of Tanach the Great, purchased an estate there and gradually ousted and supplanted the original Arab population, until the land came to be known by its new name — the land of the Druze. It is a very small territory, extending some forty or fifty miles from east to west, and some thirty miles from north to south, with a population of hardly sixty thousand, of whom about one tenth are Christian Arabs. The land is barren and desolate. The eye can stretch across dozens of kilometres and see nothing but stone-strewn country, which, in spite of the wheat growing therein, lines the roads with hard basalt walls; here and there a few squalid villages built of stones, left from Græco-Roman days; no springs of water or signs of rivulets; hardly a single bush or tree; only occasionally a little orchard standing as a monument to the indomitable will of French Colonial administration. The villages are tiny and poor in appearance, and there are practically no cities, unless Sueida, with its 4500 inhabitants, is allowed that status. The other towns — Salkad, Arrah, Bekkah, Kenevat — are spots of no particular significance. Every village is laid out like a fortress; steep and narrow streets lead to houses arranged in strange confused lines as a rather primitive protection to the place.

The 'Burg' of the feudal lord and chieftain is situated on the highest peak. No other word occurs to me when I search for a term to describe the impression first made upon me by the tribal castle of the Atrash built in 1860 by Ismail Pasha: powerful outside walls, more than a metre thick; a gate, not too wide, opening into a passage some seven metres long, turning in a sharp right angle. After crossing this queer passage, my automobile stopped in a wide square bordered on three sides by residences of the prince and leader. The fourth side constituted an open reception-hall, in which sat some sixty Druzes, armed to the teeth, awaiting, as his vassals, the orders of the Emir. This somewhat mediæval picture, which reminded me of the romance of the Knight-Errant in Mark Twain, was confirmed by the chief of the Atrash family. My host, who received me like a brother without even asking my name, sat by my side in a kind of meditative gloom. Even in his own house the Emir carried a rifle, sitting in readiness to fight at any moment. From his own lips — from the lips of Sultan Pasha El Atrash — I heard the story of the outbreak of hostilities with the French. It reads like a saga of olden days, of the days of Saladin, in whose ranks the Druzes — once *tursi*, the shield of the Orient — fought against the Crusaders.

'It was in 1921,' said the Sultan. 'A man from the Lebanon — Adham Khayim, a leader of a band who had been persecuted by the French — sought shelter in my house, and was arrested in my absence by Commandant Tranca, the acting governor. I never saw the man again, nor had I ever seen him before, but he was my guest, and it was my duty to protect him. Since the acting governor refused to surrender him I attacked a motor detachment. . . .'

To avenge his unknown guest Sultan Pasha killed a French officer and four soldiers, and was compelled to fly to Transjordania until he was granted an amnesty. And this knight of King Arthur's Court is not a figure in a Mark Twain romance, but commander-

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in-chief against the French Syrian army of to-day, head of the 'National Government of Syria.'

II

I shall not go into details in narrating the very interesting story of the antecedents of the revolution. The immediate reasons for proceeding to arms were that Governor Carbillet called upon the Druzes to receive him solemnly whenever he passed by their villages, and that General Sarrail, who gave too much credence to the dispatches of his subordinate officials, refused to receive a deputation of thirty-five sheiks and begs, who came to Beirut to complain of the misconduct of Captain Carbillet, giving as his reason the absence of this officer on leave. Gravely insulted by the behavior of the High Commissioner, the Druzes prepared themselves to prevent Captain Carbillet from reinstating himself in his post as Governor of the Djebel Druz. The French were aware of this movement, and to put it to an end they invited to Damascus five of the chiefs of the family of Atrash, the real rulers of the Djebel Druz, including the head of the family, the Emir Hammad. In Damascus they put them under arrest and deported them to Palmyra and other places of the desert. At the same time they sent troops to Kafr, halfway between the seat of Sultan Pasha, the village Kurieh, and Sueida, the headquarters of the Governor of the Djebel. Sultan Pasha learned about the imprisonment of his relatives and the approach of French troops on the same day. Before taking time to reflect, he gathered a handful of his cavalrymen (the Druzes told me there were only some eighty of them), attacked the French detachment, and almost annihilated it. On this step followed speedily the occupation of Sueida itself, where he besieged the French garrison in their barracks: the Djebel Druz found itself under arms.

The French did not take their new foe too seriously. A brigade under General Michaud, some thirty-five hundred strong, was dispatched in great haste to Sueida to rescue the besieged garrison. The brigade proceeded, perhaps too hastily, not reckoning with the old Oriental war-usages of the Druzes or with the difficulties of the terrain. The Druzes, who had in all ten thousand men under arms (of whom, however, only two thousand were concentrated along the road from Ezra to Sueida), attacked the train first, and looted the provisions and ammunition. Then they proceeded with the nearly helpless detachment itself, which they suddenly attacked on all sides. General Michaud ordered retreat, which resulted almost catastrophically, owing perhaps to the lack of war experience of the French colored troops. It appears that in this encounter the French had some two thousand casualties; according to English reports there were, after the battle, over a thousand wounded in the hospitals of Damascus.

The brigade of General Michaud was smitten. In Damascus there were only a few French companies and gendarmes. Had the Druzes grasped the significance of the situation and attacked Damascus immediately, an unavoidably dangerous situation would have been created, not only for the French in Syria, but perhaps also for the English in Palestine.

Notwithstanding their incredible courage, however, the Druzes are inefficient soldiers, not so much tactically as strategically. Their war against France was in no way prepared for, and so they could not benefit by their victory. It was a criminal folly of Sultan Pasha, and a treachery to his small,

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courageous people, to assume the fight under such circumstances, without any sort of preparation. I realized this first when Sultan Pasha asked me to stay a few days longer in the Djebel Druz to examine the seriously wounded and to attend them. There was not a single physician among the whole people, nor any medical instruments to be had, no bandages, not even any medical material to treat a first-aid case. The army was no better equipped in any other direction. They had, for instance, neither hand-grenades nor guns; and, having captured a number of machine guns (not only light guns, as the French communiqué stated; I myself saw a 105 mm. operative field-gun not far from Sueida), they did not have a single officer who knew how to use them. They attacked tanks and captured five of them, — the writer saw three burned French tanks on the road between Es Sijn and Mezraa, — but they attacked them without arms. They thrust themselves against the vehicles, caught them with their naked hands, overturned them, and put them to ashes. . . . I was shown one of their leaders who threw away his flint, and, sword in hand, attacked the French infantry at the front of his men.

Thus is war conducted in the Djebel Druz.

III

The landscape was undoubtedly of some help to the Druze warriors. One should not, however, imagine the Djebel Druz only as wild, mountainous land, with impenetrable rocks and ditches. On the contrary, the battlefield of Es Sijn and Mezraa, which witnessed the defeat of Michaud's detachment, is situated a good fifteen miles away from the foot of the real mountain; it is in the very middle of a wide, fairly flat plain which is crossed by a tolerable road from Ezraa to Busr El Hariri to Mezraa to Walgha to Sueida. The danger of war against the Druzes consists neither in the geological formation of the land nor in the lack of passable roads. One may go further and say that not even the frightful drought of the land caused the first French defeats, for the trenches dug by the French, which the writer himself saw, covered the water places of the Druze village, Mezraa, which were already in French hands. The real explanation of the catastrophe is to be seen in the stones. The lava and the enormous basalt blocks which were dragged thousands of years ago to the south and the west formed in the north of the Hauran the formidable and terrific wall of the Leja, which is therefore called Kalaat Allah, or God's Fortress, while in the south a sea of stone has overflowed the fertile, arable soil.

The Bedouins, and afterward the industrious Druzes, slowly cleared away a part of the stones. Here they heaped hills of stones, two, three, and even four metres square, which resembled small fortresses; there they accumulated large blocks along the 'streets,' which can be recognized as streets only because they are bounded on both sides by this stone-wall enclosure.

As I drove down the plain of the old Basan I saw the whole field torn into innumerable rectangulars of varying sizes. Black granite walls stretched parallel and in a vertical direction, every wall for itself. An unimportant obstacle, you may say, which an infantryman could pull down in one jump. But when they are infinitely repeated, and are invariably met at a distance of thirty, forty, or fifty metres, they form in their entirety a military obstacle of no mean value — indeed, a more dangerous one than the best-protected iron-wired enclosure.

In this fight against the European power, the Druzes do not defend anything like definite strategic points of

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importance to them. There will not even be a 'decisive direction,' to use the strategic expression, which would indicate the locality in which the French could hope to end the war. The Druze will fight where he can attack the enemy most safely. He will clear villages, sending away his women, his children, and his flocks to the neighborland. He will retreat even to the desert, if need be, and then attack once more the Europeans whom he finds on his way, penetrating from time to time his lost positions. Any troops going to fight the Druzes must therefore be ready to be attacked at any time. Every heap of stones, every wall, every hill, may serve as a battlefield.

Even airplane reconnaissance is almost useless. 'If we want to observe well we must fly three hundred or four hundred metres high,' complained a French airman, whose machine was shot by the Druzes, 'and at this height the fire of the Druzes is very dangerous.' Another feature to which no one gave any credit in the World War: infantry fire might have its effect upon airplanes. And really, not only were one or two French airplanes forced down by rifle fire, but indeed eight or nine machines. Flag operations in this terrain are therefore of limited use. Furthermore, ground reconnaissance is very difficult. In the intolerable heat and drought of the stony land, in a country where there is no shade and no water, the least step aside from the track is of fatal consequence. The French under Michaud refused to admit this. Instead of advancing step by step, they expected to put an end to the whole battle by dealing the Druzes one single blow. The blow was indeed dealt. In the stone field at the plain of Mezraa, where no tank can move and no automobile can go forward, their brigade was smashed to pieces.

Emir Hammad — whom the French exchanged, together with four other prisoners of Damascus, for forty French prisoners who were in the hands of the Druzes — showed me triumphantly the bodies of the fallen Madagascarese enemies and their white officers and N. C. O. 'No nation has succeeded in subjugating us in the last century, as you can see here for yourself. . . .' He — and still more his cousin Sultan Pasha el Atrash — sincerely believed that the French would never overthrow the Druzes completely. When I told him that the French demand for a contribution of £5000 was rather modest, and very acceptable, he retorted: 'But we are the victors. It is true that five thousand gold pounds is a ludicrously small amount; but it is not money — it is our honor which is at stake. If anyone has the right to claim a contribution, it is we, not the French! We ask nothing from them, but we shall not pay them anything in any case. Neither money nor weapons shall we give them. We have paid them with our blood. . . .'

While Sultan Pasha was speaking thus, with an air of extraordinary self-possession, while he was indulging in his exaggerated dreams of redeeming the whole of Syria, General Sarrail was busy gathering his reënforcements in Europe, clearing from the Hauran, and concentrating his forces in Damascus to prevent any rebellion in the Syrian capital. The Druzes were very much behind in a military appreciation of the situation. They did not believe that the French Parliament would agree to send European regiments to Syria, and they hoped to gather new allies among the Syrian and Transjordanian tribes, and above all in Damascus itself. And therefore they lost the decisive four weeks between the battle of Mezraa and the attack on Damascus on August 25.

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Nor was their political immaturity, amounting to a childish naïveté, any less detrimental to their fate than their utter military incapacity. (Once more, incapacity only from a strategical point of view!) I do not know whether Sultan Pasha himself believed in all that his adherents represented him as believing, but it seems to me quite probable that, at least as an encouragement to his own followers, the rumor was spread by himself that the English — who since 1860 maintained a traditional friendship with the Druzes — would intervene in favor of the rebels. Sultan Pasha himself, however, spoke to me not a word of any help from England, but the simple Druzes did not fail to communicate to me secretly that Sultan Pasha felt sure of England's help if needed.

Now every student of Eastern affairs knows perfectly well that, at least since the Conference of Lausanne, England and France have only one common interest in Syria — that is, to see the anti-European movement in the Near East suppressed as completely as possible. The fact that some of the French press believed in this nonsense is only a black spot on the French press of the Right; it is no justification for the Druzes, whose business it was to understand Near Eastern questions better than the *Écho de Paris*. Unfortunately, Sultan Pasha did not understand them at all.

He explained to me his demands: 'We cannot accept the French conditions even if they grant us autonomy. We cannot accept them, not only because we do not want to pay any contribution, not only because we do not want to surrender any of the weapons ve captured, but above all because we ave no confidence in France. What it omises to-day it may deny to-morrow. nce we do not accept its offers of a uze governor, of amnesty, and so forth. We shall be safe only when France gives Syria back her liberty. Therefore we fight, not for ourselves, but for Syria at large, and our rebellion is not a local rebellion but the beginning of the general revolution in Syria. And our conditions are — independence for Syria.'

'What do you understand by Syria, and what do you understand by independence, Pasha?' I asked.

He consulted one of the revolutionary deputies who had come from Damascus to Mejdel, the headquarters of Sultan Pasha, to prevent him from accepting the French peace conditions. After this consultation the Pasha repeated almost literally the same opinions and sentences I had learned a few hours before from the Syrian delegates in his camp. 'We ask freedom for the whole French mandatory area excepting the Lebanon. We ask for a government of our own, with a king or president as head of the State. We ask for a parliament elected by free and voluntary ballot, controlling its government. We ask for an army of our own, with supreme command of our own. If it is absolutely necessary, — I generally dislike foreigners, — but if it is absolutely necessary the French should have as many economic privileges as they want. They should be advisers of the various departments — but nothing more. In brief, they may play the same rôle that the English play in the Irak.'

I asked him whether he believed the French would accept such conditions. The Pasha curtly answered: 'They will have to. They have not enough troops in the country to wage war. At their first attack upon us, a general revolution will break out all over the country. They cannot bring reënforcements from Europe — they already have enough trouble in Morocco, and here in Syria there are not more than six thousand or seven thousand men.'

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IV

The unfortunate chieftain of the rebels was fooled by the delegates of the people's party of Damascus. He counted on the help of the Damascenes, and the Nationalists themselves were earnestly believing they would be able to come to his help and even to his rescue, and that they would beat the French at the very doors of Damascus. I did not believe in these exaggerated hopes and I was most unequivocal in the expression of my doubts. Since the fatal overthrow of Emir Feisal in 1920, in Damascus, I formed my opinion of the Damascenes — a people who, however ready to prepare a *Putsch* at any time, are utterly incapable of fighting seriously. And these great warriors, the Druzes, were mistaken in sacrificing themselves for town-people who, generally speaking, did not merit the sacrifice.

But even the Druzes will suffer their fate not quite undeservedly. It is true, they are most chivalrous, like knights in the service of Sultan Saladin. If, for instance, two heroic Druze gangmen meet a horseman in their way, one will tell the other: 'Ride forth! I will attack the man — you can continue your way.' It would be scandalous for them both to raid one single adversary. The captured French pilots whom I met at the castle of the Atrashes in Aereh — they were privates, not officers! — were eating from the same plate as the Emir Hammad, together with me, the honored guest, and together with the respected French emissary to negotiate peace. And other captured French soldiers who could not be led under custody were sent home with: 'Give our regards to General Sarrail.'

The Druzes are warriors, but nothing else. Their rebellion against France was more or less the rebellion of the sixteenth century against the twentieth. They are a small people, small and poor. Their feudal lords master them to-day even as they did nine centuries ago. Their history is only a history of quarrels between their noble families, under the secret influence of their religious leaders. I, for one, have the impression that the appointment of Christians to posts of teachers in the new public schools was one of the contributory causes to the rebellion, but I may be mistaken. They are, however, a lively and chivalrous and most hospitable people, for whom death spells no fear; for whom the words 'honor' and 'freedom,' which have lost their meaning elsewhere in the world, have still kept their significance.

It is a thousand pities that this nation has no leaders, at this critical moment, who could understand that 55,000 people could not go to war against Europe's great military power. It is a pity that the same leaders who a few months ago led the people into an unexpected victory have led it now into a most humiliating defeat. Sultan Pasha, however, understands only how to win a victory, not how to make the best use of it. He exploited his victory neither in the military sense — else he would have attacked Damascus — nor in the political sense — else he would have paid the five thousand pounds contribution, would have returned the arms, and would have concluded peace as a victor.

When I said good-bye to the Pasha and to Emir Hammad, I gazed at the dim and sad-looking Sultan, with his thick, black moustache, and at the fair, young, almost childlike Emir, with his little brown moustache over his sharp lips. They looked serious, but not at all weary and not at all peaceful. I came to like these brave men in the few days I spent with them. I know that I shall probably never see them again, for over them hangs France's sword

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THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

OLDENBURY HOLLOW

It was in a little bookshop on a tenement street in the West End of Boston that I found it, a little shop kept by a scholarly Jew, shelves full of high-explosive intellectual contraband — *Portraits and Protests*, by Sarah N. Cleghorn. And the first verses the book opened to were 'The Oldenburys.'

Fifteen years ago Miles Bradford and I, just out of college and poorer than the proverbial barnyard fowl of Job, were dwelling in an East Boston garret. The nearest restaurant was three miles away. Each evening we climbed a high hill with a superb view of the city and harbor, and, perched on its scarp, — near a nunnery surmounted by a statue of the Virgin Mary with its halo attached to a lightning rod which ran down her back, — ate half a loaf of stale bread and three bananas apiece. That was dinner. And here it was that Miles produced a copy of the *Atlantic* containing, in its Contributors' Club, two lyrics, 'The Oldenburys,' and 'The Sigourney Circle,' saying, 'Here is something good.'

And good they were: —

> Turn again into the wooded Hollow
> By the fabled Tory-hunter's well,
> Where the strange and bookish Oldenburys
> On their wasted patrimony dwell.

or: —

> There is a Parlour on the western pike,
> Below the seven waterbars:
> A dim, cool chamber looking on the woods,
> And ceiled with mimic moon and stars.

Who before had ever caught so untingly and so simply the mood of nmer afternoons in old New England houses? We promptly learned both lyrics. And the next year, when I was so rash as to take Miles to my little home town, I incurred years of chaffing to the tune of: —

> But the clocks are slow in Oldenbury Hollow,
> Where they chime with the voices of the past.

We fell to watching for Sarah Cleghorn's name on the magazine indexes. Always some pensive or touching sketch 'Of Country Places and the Simple Heart.' Then she disappeared. The earth swallowed her. What had become of the sweet songstress of Vermont villages? At last, where on earth should she turn up, where but in the pages of *The Masses* — before the war, under the editorship of Mr. Max Eastman. And bless us, what a transformation! What had become of sunbonnets and old-fashioned garden flowers? What Saint Joan's voice was this, ringing with wrath and pity in that burning lyric, 'Comrade Jesus,' beginning: —

> Thanks to Saint Matthew, who had been
> At mass-meetings in Palestine,
> We know whose side was spoken for
> When Comrade Jesus had the floor,

and on through a poem that is all one thrill of love and pain.

Soon after came her novel, *The Spinster*, and the story was clear: one more chapter of that agony which comes over the finer spirits of the middle class at the sight and sense of the injustice of their kith and kin to the class just beneath. But why had one heard nothing of this little volume of verse? A glance at the title-page date explained — 1917. How could these shy strophes of the hermit thrush be

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heard above the cannonades of that evil year? And yet, here in these pages is the now famous four-line lyric: —

> The golf links lie so near the mill
> That almost every day
> The laboring children can look out
> And see the men at play.

That innocent little quatrain gave child labor a black eye that no amount of cosmetics has ever been able to efface. In another lyric she reproaches herself with cowardice. And yet I seem to remember calling on her with Miles Bradford in the summer of 1917 — utter strangers both, but in sheer need of talking with someone who spoke another language besides that of hatred and death — and finding her wearing publicly a small red badge on which was inscribed this legend: 'Love your enemies.' That was a time when a San Francisco woman found herself in trouble with the police for putting in her window a placard plagiarizing Moses to the extent of 'Thou shalt not kill.'

On that same journey, while the Jouncing Jess, as Miles's motor truck was affectionately known, jingled past a weather-rusted farmhouse under the lee of Windward Mountain not half a mile from Miss Cleghorn's dwelling, Miles, noting a farmer in shirt sleeves reading a book on the front verandah, murmured: —

> Where the strange and bookish Oldenburys
> On their wasted patrimony dwell.

Just to rig him, I told Miss Cleghorn of the remark. 'Oh,' said she, 'that *was* the Oldenburys. They are my cousins.'

So the little book came out in 1917 and was lost in the symphony of discords and the Christmas oratorios of hate. Is it too late to review? Very well; then let me tell a few friends what a choice keepsake of homely truth and beauty is laid away in the sweet lavender of these unpretentious verses. No highfaluting, no pose, no rhetoric; but something lacking which so much contemporary verse limps — skill of versification, haunting phrase, and, above all, genuine and passionate thought and a heart burning with love of her fellow creatures. For all this, I wonder if it is not worth while to direct the wayfarer to

> Turn again into the wooded Hollow. . . .

PRIMITIVE WINTER

We had been having perfect winter weather. The snow lay deep in the valley, clean and white. The lake was covered with ice, transparent green and blue except where a wind-blown mass of flakes reflected a thousand diamonds. The trees bent under their crystal burdens, which only served to emphasize the pure, rich green of their needles. In the sheltered glades the bright red of the kinnikinic berries added a dash of color, and the waxy green of the Oregon grape made one wonder if winter really were here. The stars shone in a never-ending cold brilliancy all their own, and the aurora borealis played through the long nights.

For weeks it had been one glorious holiday season. Long sleigh-rides, tucked in warm hay under heavy skins; moonlight parties, where the skates rang loud and clear and mingled their song with the laughter of the light-hearted participators, or the long toboggans flew over the icy surface, perhaps to dump their occupants in a waist-deep drift, perhaps to go skimming far out on the shining lake; skiing, with flying coats and mufflers, down the long, smooth slopes or over the breath-taking jump-offs; snowballing amid merry shouts, even though the weapons did sometimes hit hard or again sent a shower of frozen particles down one's neck; snowshoeing back in the woods, where the deer leaped from cover and were gone, wh

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the space under the bushes was covered with tiny tracks of little wild things, where the snowshoe rabbit was only a bit of earth bounding away and leaving an endless path, to follow which brought many exciting discoveries but never the thing you sought — for these things we were all gloriously young and filled with unlimited energy.

But it ended, as all things end. The moon shone all one bright day with a ring around it. 'Blizzard coming,' the old-timers said, and we were all glad of the big woodpiles near at hand and the well-filled cellars.

The blizzard came. The morning was still, clear, freezing. The thermometer started dropping at ten. At two the signal whistles on the mill began blowing, and in school we children could not see to read. At two-thirty it was forty below, and the snow and ice were coming from the north in a solid sheet, tearing down the valley. The janitor fired the furnaces as much as he dared, and we all huddled in a room on the most sheltered side of the building, waiting for the men to come after us. The school was in the direct path of the storm.

At three-thirty they came, ten men who had risked all in that journey of an hour and a half to reach their children. An hour and a half — and town less than a mile away! We waited for the storm to slacken and the men to thaw ears, noses, and fingers. At four-thirty there was a lull, and we hastily bundled up and started for home.

There were only two men and four children in the group that went to Sunshine Hollow. Our way lay through the lumberyards. It was a few hundred yards to the piles, but the rest of the distance was fairly well protected. By the time we had covered the open space it was storming hard again, with a shifting, whirling wind. We could see only a few feet before us, and our track was soon obliterated. The men took turns breaking a path. It was a killing job. Some places the snow was packed hard, but not hard enough to bear our weight. Again the underneath crust held the trail-maker and broke under those who followed. On the sheltered side of many of the piles it was sifted so fine that a trail would not hold, and here it was necessary to carry a child and wallow through. Some of the lumber was completely covered, and the surface blown smooth. Here we attempted to cross on the boards. Once the leader stepped off the edge into eight or ten feet of snow, but luckily we were tied together and he was drawn back to safety.

It was soon pitch-dark and every inch of the way had to be felt, but since it had quit snowing and was not so cold, the handicap was balanced. The last quarter of the way, the men carried us inside their mackinaws while breaking trail. Sometimes the man who followed carried two. We must make time, for time was life. The man who had fallen into the drift continually stumbled. Twice he dropped his burden. At last he fell full length, apparently spent. The other man went ahead a few paces. He stumbled and fell uphill. It was the road! Across the little ridge was home! That imparted new energy, and we were soon over the crest, with the welcoming lights shining from every window in the Hollow, for all were keeping watch with the anxious mothers.

How long that trip had taken us, we children were never told. The man who had fallen was carried home, and spent a delirious week going over and over the terrible journey. When he recovered, his hair was white, and he had lost two toes and a finger. The rest of us were more fortunate. Careful thawing meant much pain at the time, but no succeeding damage.

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The other parties did not fare so well. The group that went to town lost one child. They searched for her all night and found her at daybreak within a few feet of home. Her father died of gangrene as a result of that night's experience, and her mother went insane, listening always for the call that she had failed to hear in the storm.

The others suffered even more. In going a quarter of a mile into the face of the gale, two sank by the wayside and never regained consciousness; a third died of resulting pneumonia; and one bright six-year-old could not stand the strain, and remains mentally six.

Why did we not remain at the schoolhouse? Because the men knew the boilers could not stand the pressure. They burst soon after we left. Had we remained, it would have meant freezing and starvation in the long week that followed, for the thermometer failed to register warmer than thirty below zero, and the wind and snow ruled every day.

Such is winter in that primitive land. A time of beauty and joy; a time of suffering and sorrow.

GRANDFATHER FRENCH'S NIGHTSHIRT

I HAVE just committed an irreverence. I have run Grandfather French's nightshirt through the electric mangle. I had no business to do it. Not even the electric hand-iron should have been thumped upon it. I should have climbed to the pantry's highest shelf, fetched down the big ancestral 'flats,' stirred up the coal fire to heat them, and pressed Grandfather French's nightshirt with them, testing them with delicate sizzling forefinger, polishing them on a beeswaxy brown paper, smoothing every gusset and needle-stroked gather to perfection.

But the thing is done. Grandfather French's nightshirt, grossly wrinkled by my hasty mangling, hangs airing on the rack, alongside X's sleazy machine-stitched blue pajamas, and much yet more ephemeral feminine gear.

Do not think that Grandfather French's personal lingerie is part of my weekly care. If, after fifty years in the many mansions, he still needs such garments (but is it not said, 'There shall be no night there'?) I am sure that old Susan and Charlie, black and faithful retainers, will have long since undertaken their accustomed laundering and valeting. This, which I have just dealt with so crudely, is one of the chance survivals of matter over spirit that make a New England garret the strolling-ground for healthy ghosts. It emerged as by fate from an old tin trunk exactly when I was in bitter need of a smock-apron to cover me over while I picked currants and made jelly. I slipped it on without a qualm, spattered it well with clear pink juice, and washed and ironed it before a realization of my irreverence laid hold of me.

It is a simple vasty garment, made of fine white cotton, with a double yoke, a full body, sleeves close-gathered into tight buttoned cuffs, and a standing collar, also buttoning well up at the throat. I can but wonder at such insistence upon decorous neck and wrists in a robe that treats the nether limbs so sketchily. Grandfather French is reputed to have stood six feet three in his stockings: his nocturnal smock barely reaches the knees of me, who am but five feet eight. A brief problem in mental arithmetic leaves me with seven inches unaccounted for.

But it is unseemly to question such brevity. A nightshirt made every stitch by hand, with tiny rolled hems, corners mitred as by a cabinetmaker, buttonholes firm as New England backbones, may surely be of whatever length it pleases without offense. No one now

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would set such stitches but a mother working her dreams into her first baby's soft white ruffles; and few modern mothers could if they would.

This homely garment could have been no special labor of love. It is all the more a symbol and a sign, left behind by Grandfather French when he mounted the chariot and rode away to glory. I can fondly imagine that it reveals him, as I know him to have been: a holy man, yet a shrewd one, with the clear gray-blue eyes, thin nose, and sensitive lips of his tribe; a courtly yet powerful man in his own sphere; a scholar and dreamer, and an executive; a typical New England nineteenth-century product.

How dared I treat his nightshirt with no more respect than my husband's khaki camping-clothes?

Yet use is respect. Grandfather French would not have found me a light woman when I stripped the currant bushes of their blazing ruby globes and strained the rich juice, dripping with the fragrant blood of summer. He would have smiled upon his nightshirt in the rôle of a decent calico apron. He believed that bread-making and jelly-brewing were proper work for women. 'Put 'em to the tubs; put 'em to the tubs,' he would have prescribed for the restless nervous women whose hands leave too much time for their heads. He would have rebuked me for sitting here scribbling rather than for wearing his nightshirt among the currants.

But his potential rebukes cannot scare me much. For he should know, as I know, that with all my rudeness to his *manes* I do respect them deeply. My respect even leads to wonder whether the manes of the present generation can ever hover with such powerfully brooding wings over the generation after next. How can we expect our lavender soisette and peach-tinged crêpe de Chine to survive fifty years, instinct with such vitality that grandchildren will reconstruct us, even to our morals and spirituals, from them, like a megalosaur built from a single toe-bone? It is a unique spirit that can nullify the comic quality inherent in a nightshirt and make it significant as a toga.

Undoubtedly, as a generation we have our strong treasures. But as individuals? I am not too sure. I remember a recent June, when the first president of a great woman's college walked down the long aisles of waiting alumnæ, giving them his old-time benediction — the courtly bow, the radiant yet austere smile. No one was ashamed of the lump in her throat or the cloud in her eyes. They were instinctive tributes, not only to the choking rush of each one's private memories, but to the rare spiritual strength of a whole half-century, permitted here one of its final and most complete personifications. Has any man now in his thirties or forties or fifties the germ of that strange special magic?

Grandfather French's nightshirt does not call for too tender consideration. My coarse dealings have not robbed it of one shred or thread of semicomic dignity. Underneath the currant-stains, the careless wrinkles, it must know that I am saying: —

'Thank you for your nightshirt, Grandfather French! I have left your portrait in the attic; your sermons are crumbled or burned. But I have n't forgotten you, Grandfather French. Little bits of big past things: the Unitarian Controversy, Emerson, Channing, Sumner, Abolition, Lincoln, the bitter days of war, shrewd dreams and holy dreams, narrowness and vision — they are all stitched into your nightshirt; and stitched, tight and small and far below the surface, into the very drops of my blood. Thank you, Grandfather French!'

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THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

'OVER an armed camp, in a hard old Roman world,' writes the Reverend **Joseph Fort Newton,** 'the song of the angels rang out, proclaiming "Peace on earth among men of good will." How far off it must have seemed on that night! How far off it seems to-day!' That such 'farness' is not infinite, that the 'peace on earth' of which Christmas is the perfect symbol shall indeed come again, is the bourne of Mr. Newton's heartening prophecy. Recently, at the invitation of Bishop Garland, Mr. Newton has entered the Protestant Episcopal Church to become rector of the Memorial Church of Saint Paul at Overbrook. ¶The moral of **James Norman Hall's** delightful experience is that, if you cast your bread upon the waters, it may be returned to you as filet of sole on toast. ¶In his story, **H. G. Dwight,** who returns to the *Atlantic* after a lamented absence, takes sly, shy pleasure in describing some little-understood exhibits in an American Art Museum. ¶As an introduction to his manuscript, **Paul Ernest Anderson** sent us the following letter: —

I am twenty-seven years of age, and an American of many generations. . . . Born in the eastern part of the United States, I passed my boyhood in Germany and the Far West. I resided successively in Illinois, Utah, and California. It was in Los Angeles that I first became aware of the wandering hordes of migratory workers, bums, tramps, and stiffs. I did not, however, at that time know that there were various groups of wanderers, each one differing from the other in many important characteristics.

Some few years ago I made the harvest; but it was not until the fall of last year, when, as I have outlined, I took a hike through the back country of the plains, that I commenced to gain the information set down in this paper.

I had not gone to the West to learn about tramps. In fact I had gone there merely for the fun of hiking and of observing the people and their manners.

I wrote the main facts of the paper last year, very late in the season. I felt that it must have some value either as news or as information to social workers in general. In conclusion, I took pains to verify all the facts by diligent questioning of various tramps. Their accoun main agreed with what I wrote in this would unhesitatingly back up every st

* * *

The barb of **Emily Stone Whiteley's** little skit will tickle or annoy, according to the disposition of the reader. ¶The first publication of some Leaves from **Jane Steger's** Journal in the *Atlantic* for January, 1925, stirred our audience to a response rare in our experience. It is a privilege to record these later pages from the innermost life of a woman whose religion is her sole and strong support. ¶Winner of the Newdigate Prize for Poetry while at Oxford, **Franklin McDuffee** is now an instructor in English at Dartmouth College. ¶From her vivid memory, **A Woman Physician** recalls those enduring events which destroyed her faith and created it again. ¶Commenting upon his strange story, **Milutin Krunich** remarks: —

Last September there was an oil-tank fire here (California), wiping out, in three days, the whole farm, and giving the inhabitants of Monterey, New Monterey, and Pacific Grove the scare of their lives. The fire was due to human stupidity and carelessness in not protecting such valuable property from lightning. And this stupidity I had in mind when I began the story. But after writing four or five pages the present theme came forcibly to my mind. Without any trouble, with astonishing ease, I wrote it. All the people in it are imaginary.

Mr. Krunich will be remembered for his narrative, 'We, the Cavemen,' which appeared in the November *Atlantic.*

* * *

The Reverend **Vivian T. Pomeroy,** of the First Parish, Milton, presents a parallel, as genuine as it is pretty, which leaves the honors about even between the past and the present generation. ¶In Canton, **Nora Waln** finds the materials and mood for the creation of her Chinese tapestries. ¶A resident of Lynn, essayist and poet betimes,

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Theodore Morrison may be found from nine to five at the *Atlantic* office. ¶For the past thirty years, **William Dana Orcutt** has been the moving spirit of the University Press of Cambridge and the Plimpton Press of Norwood. Designer of the famous 'humanistic' type, Mr. Orcutt in 1924 was decorated by the Italian Government with the Cross of the Crown of Italy 'for distinguished services in interpreting Italy to America in the sister arts of literature and typography.' Incidentally, Mr. Orcutt is the author of fifteen novels. ¶With Wilbur Wright and certain farsighted airmen, **Sir W. Beach Thomas** has learned much in studying the flight of birds. ¶The essay which has been found among the papers of the late **Francis B. Gummere,** professor of English at Haverford College, is as timely to-day as when written in 1918. Professor Gummere's occasional word of pleasantness and wisdom has been missed in our columns.

* * *

For fifteen years **James Murphy** has been actively engaged in the study of Italian questions. During the war he was appointed by the Italian Government to direct its press propaganda in London, but upon the advent of the Fascists to power he returned to Italy as a correspondent for the British press. He contributed to the *Fortnightly Review* and the *Edinburgh Review*, and to the London *Daily News*. Because of certain criticism, especially in regard to finances, contained in his articles, his position was rendered so unpleasant as practically to compel him to leave the country. Although some of his opinions arise naturally out of his personal experience, they in general possess a wide implication, involving several perplexing episodes whose cause and relation have hitherto defied explanation. ¶A tax expert, **Raymond Edwards Huntington** gives us a personal and provident solution of his grievous problem of 'Death and Taxes' in the September *Atlantic*. Mr. Huntington wishes to thank Prentice-Hall, Inc., for the use of certain information contained in his article. **Arthur E. Suffern** sends us his sobering review of the coal situation from the Washington Institute of Economics, which numbers among its officers Robert S. Brookings, Arthur T. Hadley, and David F. Houston. In 1914, Mr. Suffern was made Special Investigator of the Coal Industry by the United States Commission on Industrial Relations. **Wolfgang von Weisl** is a former Austrian cavalry officer, who since the war has been the correspondent for the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* in Palestine, Syria, and Arabia, where his services have won the commendation of many Eastern experts.

* * *

In order not to complicate further an extremely circumstantial account, the editors deemed it necessary to withhold all personal references in Mr. Hoagland's essay, 'Science and the Medium,' wherever possible. For those readers who are interested in the minutiæ of the case, we should like to add that Mr. Grant H. Code, who contributed much to the solution of the Margery case, is now an instructor in English at the University of Delaware. At the time of the investigation, Mr. Code was an assistant in the English Department of Harvard, and together with his colleague, Mr. S. Foster Damon, and Mr. Hoagland was instrumental in organizing the Harvard sittings.

* * *

We believe that the *Atlantic Monthly* was the first publication to take serious cognizance of the inequities of Quarantine 37, which threatens to play havoc with the garden-lovers of this country. We note with satisfaction that, pursuant to the discussion roused, the case has been reopened by the Department of Agriculture. The official version issued by the Department follows.

> When Secretary Jardine took office in March, these restrictions came to his attention, together with arguments that conditions might have changed since the plan was originally decided upon. He thereupon determined on a detailed review of the situation, including not only a much more thorough examination of bulb imports than had previously been possible, but also a survey of the extent to which pests carried by the bulbs might already have a foothold in the United States. The information being assembled by experts, from imports still coming in and from field surveys, will be available to a sufficient extent to permit within a few weeks a decision based exclusively on actual facts as they exist to-day.

Discussion, it seems, does have its advantages.

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It is a privilege to give the testimony of another observer who, like Sir Martin Conway, has endeavored to look Russia squarely and impartially in the face.

NEW YORK CITY

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

On my way to Russia in the summer of 1924, I heard of Sir Martin Conway's visit to that country to examine the condition of art treasures under the Soviet Government, and I found in England that he had given an account of his study, the more valuable because literal and not prejudiced by judgments on general economic or political conditions in that extraordinary country. His article in the September *Atlantic* corroborates our deductions in other fields of inquiry — those of public health and child welfare. Indeed, some of our experiences were identical.

Upon the invitation of Dr. Samashko, Commissar of Health of all the Russias, I went to Russia with Professor Lillian Hudson of the Department of Nursing and Health at Teachers College, and Elizabeth Farrell of the Department of Education of New York City. We were most fortunate in securing in New York the services, as interpreter, of a Barnard College graduate who spoke Russian fluently.

Dr. Alice Hamilton, Professor of Industrial Medicine at the Harvard Medical School, was invited to visit Russia with us, but, because of a meeting of the League of Nations, was forced to make her trip some months later. Dr. Hamilton summarizes her investigations in the *Journal of Industrial Hygiene* for February, 1925, by saying that Russia has much industrial hygiene and little production, while the United States has much production and little industrial hygiene.

The Russian Government extended the invitation to us that contacts might be made in order to bring about an intelligent understanding of the theory and practice of their institutions for children. They desired to obtain the benefit of our observations, and to discuss freely public health, nursing-problems, and the diversified means of protection implied in the term 'child welfare.' Wherever we went we found courtesy and a willingness to have us see and examine their methods, and our frank criticism was genuinely solicited.

The Russian practice lagged far behind the theory of social work, but we found cleanliness in the places we visited — in the institutions, in the hotels, in the railway sleeping-cars, and on the Volga boats. Before we left London, Mrs. Philip Snowden, who had been in Russia at an earlier period, assured us that a ton of Keating's Powder (insecticide) would be insufficient, but we had no occasion to open a single package of the many so tenderly bestowed upon us for our protection. Since our travels took us mainly to the cities, we had no opportunity to test the hygiene in the peasants' homes. On our journeyings we found the trains not only clean but on time as well — further evidence that Russia was in such realistic matters well organized according to modern standards.

Objects of art, music, and the ballet seemed to us to be almost venerated, though we saw statues that had been thrown from buildings and pedestals, reminiscent of the deeds of historic French and other revolutionary mobs. We saw one picture at the Winter Palace in Leningrad that had been slashed by an angry mob in the first hot 'Red' days, but the curator, obviously distressed by the mutilation, assured us that the offender had been punished for what was considered a serious offense, and the picture still hung in its accustomed place as the 'horrible example.' The personal possessions of the unfortunate Tsar and Tsarina were in order and carefully protected from vandals.

Sincerely yours,

LILLIAN D. WALD

* * *

Interesting in itself and in its bearing on Mr. Huntington's paper in this number is this dignified and indignant protest against the tax policy of these United States.

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

Mr. Raymond Edwards Huntington in the September *Atlantic*, writing on the theme of 'Death and Taxes,' mentions, among what he calls the 'sore spots' of the inheritance-tax situation, the taxation of life insurance.

The mulcting of the estates and beneficiaries of the provident and thrifty through inheritance taxes levied both by the Federal Government and by the States is only part of the iniquitous treatment that the insured public receives at the hands of the taxing authorities. Administrators of estates in which life insurance usually makes up the greater part of the property value find out to their indignation what the inheritance tax means. That is a direct tax which the deceased person probably never thought about. But there are indirect taxes which the insured constantly pay, amounting to millions and millions of dollars yearly, in the mutual life companies of the country. For example, the Federal Government takes 12½ per cent of the interest income of such companies, less the interest required to maintain their legal reserve and other minor deductions. This in effect neutralizes the theory of tax-free bonds because the Government indirectly collects a tax on the interest of these bonds which are the property of the membership of the company.

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In addition to what the Federal Government does, every State in the Union except Nevada imposes a tax on the company's income within the State. This is done without any uniformity whatever. Of course this in effect violates the principle of mutuality. The State that grabs the most gets the most. If a company should undertake to equalize this in the dividends paid to the policyholders in such a State, the probabilities are that the State levying a three-per-cent tax on the premiums collected in that State would cancel the company's license to do business.

Last year the company with which I happen to be connected paid to the Federal Government and the various State Governments nearly four million dollars in taxes and license fees.

All this, of course, takes no account of what estates pay under inheritance taxes.

The Dominion of Canada in this, as in some other things, sets an example that we might well emulate. The life-insurance corporations are perfectly willing to pay whatever taxes may be necessary so that their supervision shall be no charge upon the general public. The Dominion of Canada requires life-insurance companies to pay in taxes an amount equal to the cost of maintaining its insurance supervision. In 1923 my company paid about .06 per cent of our premium income to the Dominion Government of Canada. In the United States this tax varies from one to three per cent.

The legislatures of various States, casting about for sources of revenue, find the insured an easy prey. As the United States Bar Association said on one occasion, 'Premiums paid on life insurance constitute money in sight,' and the average legislator cannot resist the temptation to take it. The insured is defenseless — in fact, generally speaking, he does n't even know that he is being taxed!

DARWIN P. KINGSLEY
President, New York Life Insurance Co.

* * *

Indians and inefficiency.

HIGHLAND, CALIFORNIA

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

Leo Crane's knowing and most readable article on the Hopi Indians in the July *Atlantic* arraigns briefly and incidentally, but effectively, the conduct of one Bureau of Government. My only connection with Government affairs has been with that same Bureau, and my opinion of its efficiency, at any rate during some periods of its operation, coincides perfectly with Mr. Crane's.

President Roosevelt appointed me a Special Allotting Agent, in the Indian Service, and I was ordered by wire from Washington, on a twenty-third of November, to proceed at once to Pala to allot that reservation. When my instructions arrived they directed me to divide the reservation, containing about 3600 acres, into as many parcels of land as there were individuals, men, women, and children, among the Indians interested, and to give one of the pieces of land to each Indian. Such a simple plan — and one that would have worked admirably, for instance, on the plains of South Dakota. But Pala lies in a narrow valley of the San Luis Rey River and is surrounded by high mountains, along whose skirts the land extends. So one Indian would receive a level and very fertile farm in the river bottom, while another would be obliged to make his home on a rocky hillside with no water, either for irrigating, which is necessary here, or even for house use. Such a condition had actually prevailed once there, and one would think that fact might have prevented the Commissioner of Indian Affairs from doing such a thing again.

Some years before there had been three families of the original Pala Indians squatting in the valley, and Mr. Albert K. Smiley, who for many years entertained the annual Indian Conference at Lake Mohonk, and was for long on the Board of Indian Commissioners, was asked to select allotments for them.

Mr. Smiley placed the Indians on three very fine contiguous forty-acre tracts lying in a line from east to west in the river bottom. But at the General Land Office in Washington it was found that the westernmost forty had been filed on by a white man, so the armchair experts shifted that Indian family to the next forty west, lying in the same line. That forty, however, was on a mountain so precipitous and so rocky that the engineer who was sent to establish the corners could not get up it with his instruments. There was just room on the allotment at the base of the mountain for a cabin, and that is where the Indian family lived, for the imbecile injustice was never remedied.

Naturally I protested against following such instructions and gave reasons, but without changing the official attitude. I continued to protest, submitting a plan which I considered feasible. After some weeks a clerk in the Indian Office who sympathized with my efforts told me privately that there was a difference of opinion in the Office which amounted to a controversy. But seemingly it did not occur to anyone to send a competent man to look the ground over and advise with me.

When I had been held on the ground without doing any work exactly six months I was ordered by wire to Washington. Even then the Commissioner's chief concern seemed to be to build a thoroughly modern and commodious *jail* on the Pala reservation. Those Indians were the ones who had been evicted from their long-time home

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at Aguascalientes and forcibly transported to the new location; they were supposed to be in a very bad humor, and consequently must need a jail.

I explained to the Commissioner that Pala already possessed a very strong concrete jail of one room, and that it was almost never occupied, only very rarely to serve as a one-night bedroom for a drunken Indian. But it would not do — Pala, for several reasons, was to be made a show place. The old jail must be moved off and a new one built. I explained again that I believed that could not be done, as the concrete walls were very thick and I was pretty sure were anchored to rock.

'Very well, then,' said the Commissioner, 'the building must be dynamited and cleared off. We have plenty of money in the building-fund.'

That Commissioner, fortunately, was not in office long enough to build a new jail, and he has since died.

Thus endeth the first chapter, and it might be followed by many more.

Yours very truly,

L. Worthington Green

* * *

A gentleman from Missouri answers Colin Dale's conundrum.

Dear Atlantic, —

The last contribution to the Contributors' Column of the October *Atlantic* contains a question concerning poetry, and you decline to answer the conundrum, but pass the buck to your readers.

My answer is that some poets do 'intentionally pile colorful words upon colorful words, the whole fabric interwoven with no meaning.'

I have aroused the ire of hero-worshipers who see something soulful and beautiful in lines that my limited mind fails to discover. My own family have scorned me for making light of beautiful lines; and to clinch the matter, and to impress upon me the gross ignorance that attaches to me, they have said, 'Would these verses be printed in the *Atlantic* if there was not a beautiful underlying thought which you are too ignorant to discover?' Would they indeed? That was a poser.

Stung by the sarcasm of my friends, my otherwise loyal wife, my family, I decided to write verse. On the impulse of the moment I sat down to my trusty typewriter and dashed off a lyric. I can assure you that the words had no meaning, — to me, anyway, — and I committed forgery and signed the name of one of the writers that I had most severely criticized. I took it home, submitted it to my wife and to others, and said, 'There is a copy of a poem by Miss ——. Read it, and if you can find any sense in it please show it to me.' I was astounded to find that there was a deep, hidden meaning, too much for my feeble intellect to comprehend; and moreover, it was 'one of the best poems that Miss —— had ever written.' My little story is absolutely true. Can you beat it? And is not my answer to the conundrum the correct one?

Guy H. Chase

* * *

What every Noah knows.

Danville, Va.

Dear Atlantic, —

Another rainy day, — the eighth in succession, — and I marooned in a cottage in the mountains of north Georgia!

Though the titles of the volumes in the cottage's one bookcase matched well with the gloom outside, I had braved several of the less forbidding, after exhausting my meagre store of magazines and daily papers. Moved by desperation for 'something to read,' I sent my maid to the house next door, to which, the day before the rain, had come an army officer with his wife and daughter. With a note and my ten or twelve magazines the maid waded over, returning shortly with a stack of twenty pale-yellow magazines of uncertain ages and this delightful note: —

'My dear Miss Brimmer: I am sending you a few of my precious dog-eared *Atlantics* without apology as to their age or condition. If you've read them, you'll not mind reading them again, since they are all dog-eared copies. Nomads such as we can't keep all our magazines, so our little family has the habit of turning down the front cover of the numbers we simply can't discard and these we cart about from post to post. To be dog-eared, a magazine must stand a terrible test. Perhaps it will be interesting to you to guess which article or articles won for these copies this distinction. When the floods have ceased, come over and tell me your guesses.'

I had only a newsstand acquaintance with the *Atlantic*, but, obeying a whim, I counted down the pale-yellow pile and pulled out the seventh copy, which I opened at random to a story called 'When Hannah Var Eight Yar Old.' I read it once, twice, three times. Before the close of that summer I had read all of the twenty copies and had made dozens of notes about them.

I felt like a prospector who had discovered a gold mine. In October of that year (1913) I bought stock in the Atlantic Gold Mine to the extent of one year's subscription. Every succeeding year I have made a like purchase. So pleased am I with the dividends that every year I have induced one or more of my friends to purchase stock — baiting them always with my own dog-eared copies of the *Atlantic*.

Rose L. Brimmer

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